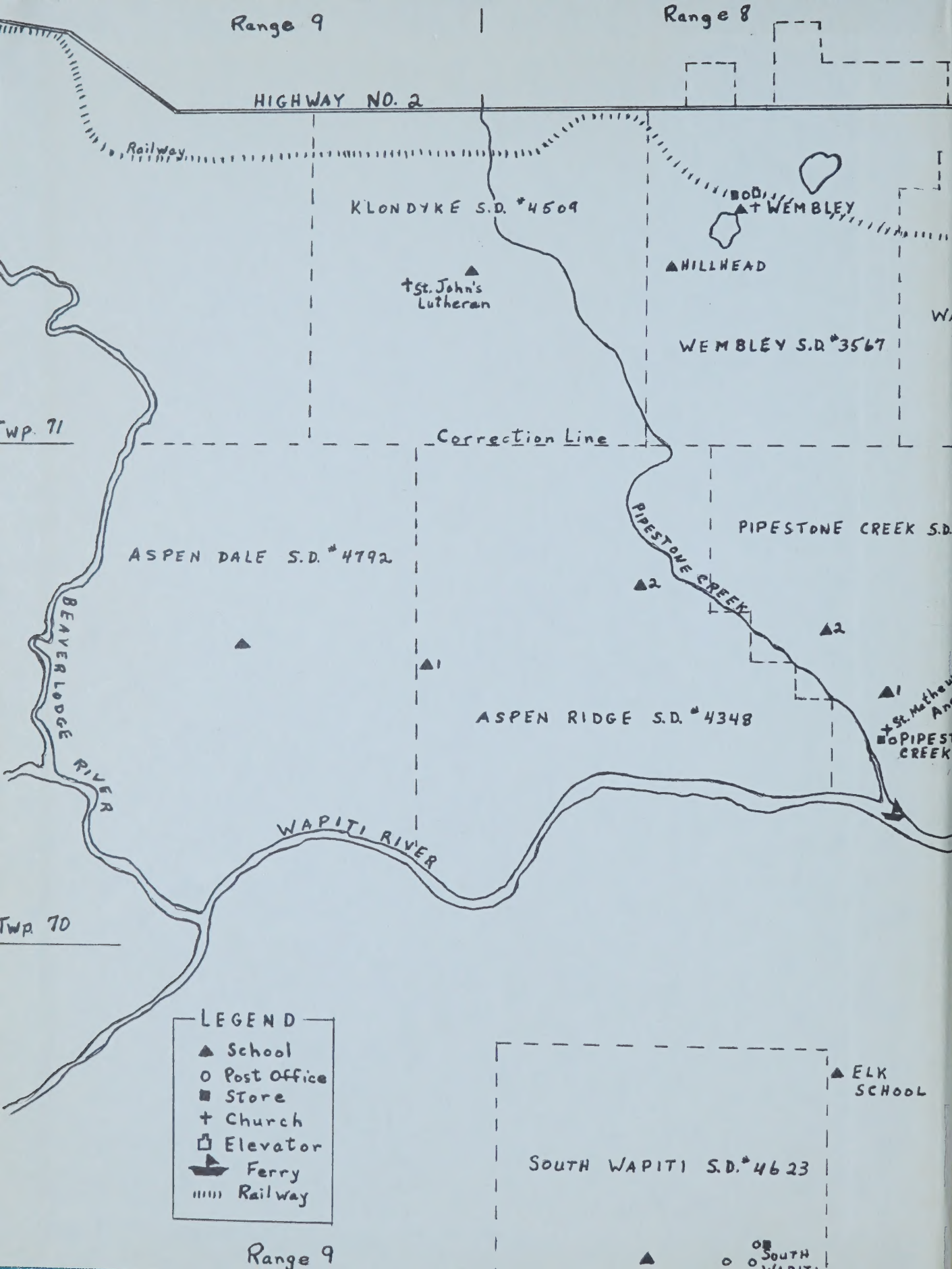
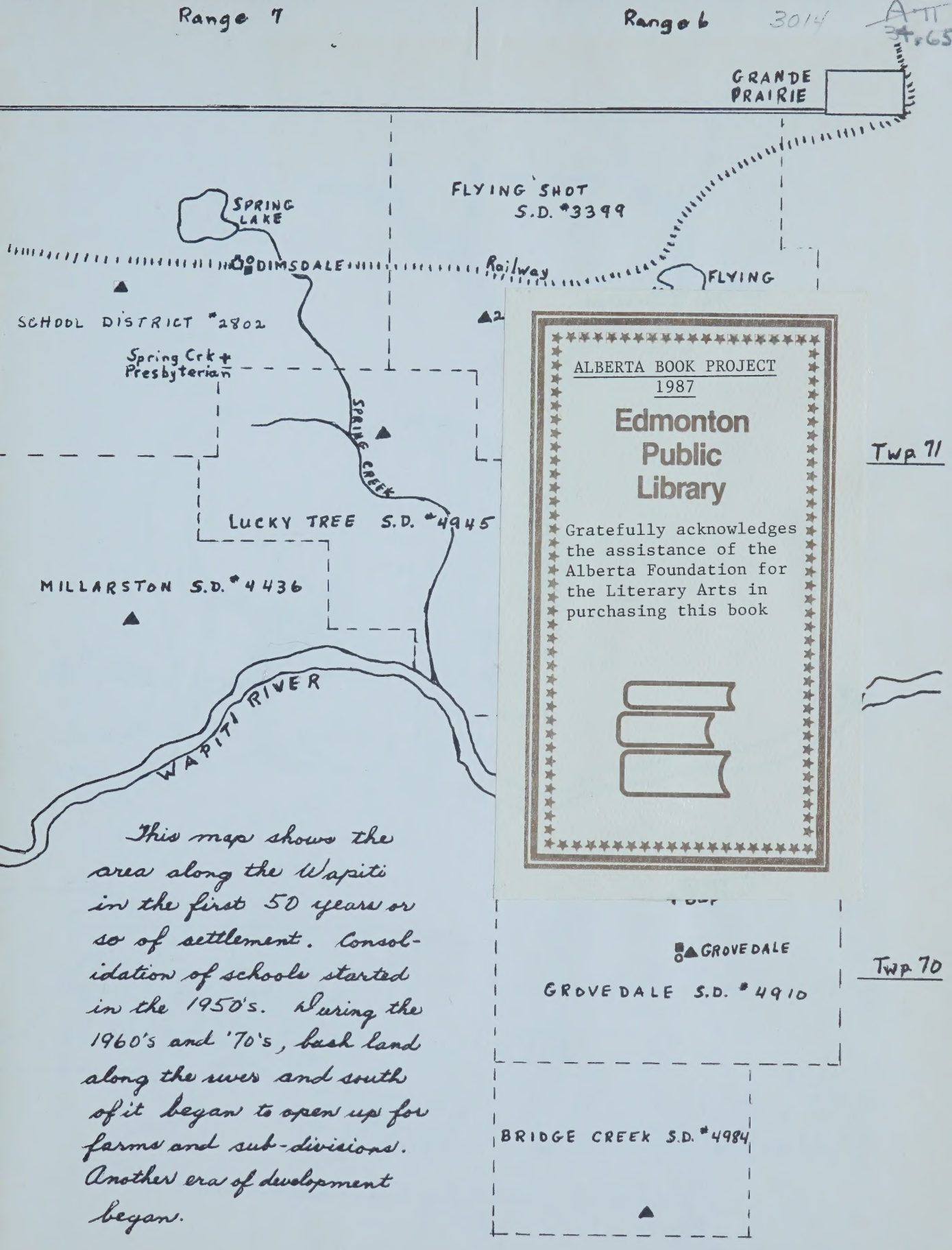
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This map shows the area along the Wapiti in the first 50 years or so of settlement. Consolidation of schools started in the 1950's. During the 1960's and '70's, bush land along the river and south of it began to open up for farms and sub-divisions. Another era of development began.


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Along the Wapiti

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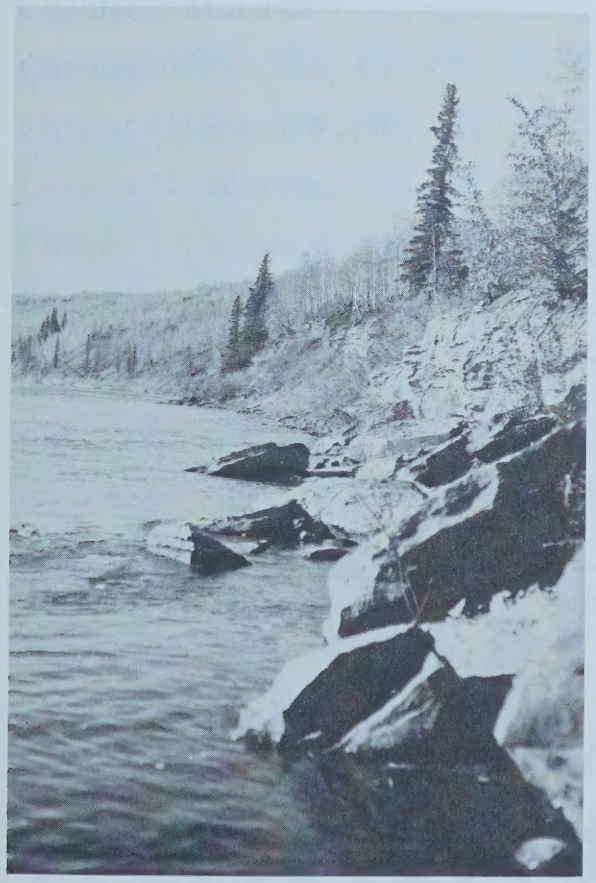
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Foreword

"Along the Wapiti" is a people's history of a small portion of northwestern Alberta. It includes stories of people from Flying Shot to South Wapiti, from Grovedale to Klondyke Trail, and in between. The area is more or less bounded by Highway Two on the north, the Beaverlodge River on the west, Wapiti Road on the east and the edge of settlement on the south. The Wapiti River threads its way through the middle of it all, touching everyone in the unforgettable way only a river can.

The people who speak through these pages are Indians, early white pioneers or present day inhabitants, all part of the warp and woof that make the whole piece of cloth.

The river's name, Wapiti, came from the Algonquian word for the large North American deer or elk. These elk, or wapiti (rhymes with hoppity), roamed along the river and its hinterland.



Along the Wapiti.

The river itself rises in a small lake in the Rockies known as Fish Fossil Lake. Some ten or twelve miles later, the little mountain stream enters Wapiti Lake. On its northeasterly way from there, it widens into mini lakes, and narrows to fall over cliffs in several places before it joins with the Smoky and Simonette rivers to enter the Peace River.

To the best of our ability we, the compilers, have tried to see that dates are accurate and names spelled correctly, but realize we are not infallible. Our aim has been to take these 500 or so stories from many people and many places and weave them into a readable book, meanwhile retaining the flavor of each contributor. We kept in mind that the Wapiti River was the thread that wove the lives of the people together.

As the river flows on, we hope the heritage of the pioneers flows through these pages.

Acknowledgements

Compiling a regional history book such as "Along the Wapiti" can be done only with the co-operation of many people. The Wapiti River Historical Society would like to thank the following:

New Horizons, Alberta Culture, the Dimsdale Recreational Society, the town of Wembley, Procter and Gamble Cellulose and Mr. Len Gibbons for financial assistance.

Miss Isabel Campbell and the County of Grande Prairie for making their files and resources available to our researchers.

Mrs. Yvonne MacAlister for calling the first meeting on February 22nd, 1978 at Alec Cameron's and getting the ball rolling.

Artists Ken Lawrence, Vicki Hotte and Yvonne Anderson for their several artistic contributions, with a special thanks to Ken for the elk and Vicki for the lettering on the cover.

The Dimsdale community for the use of the hall for meetings; also the Valins and Stolls for allowing us to meet in their homes when needed.

All those who helped with research, gathering, compiling, typing and proofreading stories, and those who contributed to the task of fund raising.

Everyone who contributed stories, poems, and pictures.

The editors' husbands, Joe and George, for chauffeuring and waiting patiently for "otherwise engaged" wives over the past two years.

Ronalds Western Printing Limited, Bulletin-Commercial Printers Division for working with us in so positive a manner.

Wapiti River Historical Society

To The Spirit Of Pioneers

Pioneers

Pioneers followed the trails
To the northern parklands,
Reality and hope blended undefinably
Against the Western sky.
The prairie along the Peace:
"The last frontier", they said.
Framed in the sector of a chinook arch
And radiant in the splendor
Of the northern lights
It rested; undulating and beautiful,
Dotted with lakes
And veined with silvery streams
Shrouded in willows.
Poplar groves
Seclusive and shady,
Screening the grassy meadows
Sprinkled with daisies and lilies.
Saskatoons in the whiteness of springtime;
The fruit of the summer.
Roadsides bordered with yarrow and bluebell.
The sound of the wind,
And the song of the birds in the morning.
The scent of the silver willow.
The sting of the nettle.
The hillside path of the bison
Grassed and forgotten.
The crack of the poplars in the frosty silence of winter.
The aging tree in the thicket.
Things of beauty and hope.
Symbols of peace and assurance.
Suggestions of hardship and fear.
Elements of defiance.
Revitalizing the spirit.
Renewing the courage.
The soul of the pioneer.

Ada V. Schweitzer

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Vicki Hoffe
'76

Chapter 1: In The Beginning



In the Beginning

This chapter is a salute to the original people of North America. As a Cheyenne Indian Chief said, "Once only Indians lived in this country. Then came strangers from across the Great Water. No land had they. No food had they. We gave them of our food."

The strangers took what land they wanted and settled it, and the Indian way of life was challenged, decimated and all but discarded. It can never be the same as it was, for either Indian or stranger, but as the Cheyenne Chief continued, "White men and Indians who fought each other should now be one people. There are birds of many colors, but they are all birds. There are horses of many colors, yet they are all horses. So with all living things, animals, plants, and men." There are many colors of Canadians, but all are Canadians.

"Along the Wapiti" begins with the story of our Indian heritage, and biographies of some of the Indian people who lived in the area in the 20th century. These stories were originally told by John St. Arnault and written down by several other people, in a joint Indian-white-man venture.

Indian Heritage

The Indian people lived in this land even before recorded time and they lived fairly peacefully. They didn't just go wherever they wanted to, but had certain areas they called home and made their living from. Occasionally a stronger nation got greedy and raided a smaller nation and took them over, but normally they stayed within their own areas, hunting buffalo and so on.

The Chieftain of each band or tribe was like a Royal Family type of thing, and was handed down from one generation to another. Each tribe had a law system of its own and lived by it, and one tribe's law would not be the same as another's because they all had a little different beliefs.

The main belief of all tribes involved the Medicine Man that they had, and each tribe had its own. Whenever some problem came up they discussed it with their Medicine Man. He was like their god. They did not have religion like we know it today, but they did believe in a Higher Power. They lived according to this Higher Power, the Great Medicine Man.

The Chief had his own councils and he discussed matters with them. He didn't just go ahead and do as he pleased; though he was Chief, he was controlled by the council.



Indian family at Shuttler Flats.

The Indians didn't hunt just as a matter of hunting, they hunted when it was needed, and they hunted different times of the year for different reasons. This is how it was when there was nothing but Indian people in the country. Those who broke the council or tribal law were kicked out of the tribe, and they started roaming from one tribe to another trying to create trouble between tribes. This was one of the causes of inter-tribal wars.

Then, white men started to come into the country, just in small groups to begin with. Many of the things they brought with them were strange and unknown to the Indians, and at first the Indian thought this must be a great white god.

One of the things that the white man brought was firearms. The Indian had his bow and arrow that he made. Then the white man brought something where all you had to do was put it up to your shoulder and out comes the fire and something went with it to hit the object and down went the object. It was a great magician type of thing to the Indian, and in battles the white man used machine guns and artillery that would throw this fire quite a distance. But the Indians still had the power, for they controlled the area, and the white men were scared of them. That is why the white men had to do all kinds of negotiating with the Indians.

There was just as much massacring done by the white people as there was by the Indians. If the white man won a battle with the Indians, however, he called it a victory, but if the Indians won, the white man called it a massacre. The thing that often happened was that the cavalry would raid a small camp where only the elderly, the women and kids were left, massacre them, and that would spark a flame and set the people at war.

The white man also brought liquor with him. Since Indians were not used to it, they got drunk easily. Then all kinds of deals were made. They started to sign peace treaties where the whites would give the Indians a reserve on which they were to remain and the whites would look after them. The white man certainly looked after them all right - took all their rights away and kept them bound within this reserve.

What was a great thing once was the story of a young warrior, Chief White Cloud. He got the name of White Cloud when he was a little boy. The tribe was camped along a ridge and he used to go up there and sit for hour after hour and watch the white clouds go by. The Chief of the tribe had a very pretty daughter, a princess. The way it was in those days, you didn't just marry who you wanted to, you married whoever you were told to marry, and that was it! So the Chief had a demonstration by each warrior to see who could put out the best costume and the best horse, and had them all line up something like a horse show. The Chief went around and picked out the one that he thought would be most suitable for his daughter. He picked out White Cloud, and when the old man died, White Cloud became chief and was known as Chief White Cloud.

Sometime later, they were camped not too far from the fort where the cavalry was. Chief White Cloud's wife became sick and a scout that was negotiating with them said maybe the great white doctor could do something about it.

So they allowed the white doctor to come into the Indian village and examine her, and he told the Chief that she wouldn't survive the winter if she didn't get better accomodation. He agreed that he would sign peace with the whites providing his wife continued to live. So he signed peace with the United States government and moved within the fort and his wife was treated and she lived. In return, the tribe was given a reserve for as long as the sun comes up from the east and falls in the west, and the rivers flow and the grass turns green. This peace, in the agreement that the Chief was promised, would stand forever and he was given the right to hunt buffalo whenever his people required.

To the north, which is today known as Manitoba, where the Chief settled, he signed a similar agreement with the Canadian government, that as long as the Indian people would remain on the reserve they would not be molested by the white man. That has been broken and violated many times.

When the Indian people first lived in this country the only disease that they actually had was tuberculosis, and they had only to hemorrhage for several hours and they died without really suffering any great length of time. Today, the white man brings all kinds of food to Indians and the same with the Eskimo people to the north, they never knew such a thing as a toothache until the white man started selling chocolate bars. Now that the North American Indians have the same food as any other human being, they have the same kind of sicknesses caused by the food they eat and the polluted air they breathe.

After the Riel Rebellion, a certain white man, who the Indians believe caused the Metis to be defeated, moved to the Lac St. Anne area. No Metis or Indian wanted to have anything to do with him after what he had done. That is why a lot of these Indians came to live within the Grande Prairie area, as they called it. It was big, and it was grand, and it was prairie, and that is how it got its name.

This country was loaded with wild cattle and horses before the white settlers came and started to fence it and take all these things away from the Indian people. Now most of our criminal institutions are full of Indian people for stealing, but they didn't put the white man in prison for stealing their land or anything. The Indians were certainly a lot better off before the white man came to the country than they are today.

Now they must try and live by the white man's law, because they signed their rights away. It is there on paper. The white man, though, is starting to violate these rights, take away the Indian's land rights, hunting rights and so on. That is why the Indian people march on Ottawa, to try and protect their rights as the Indians have done in the States. Of course, some things that happen in the States do not necessarily apply to the Indians of Canada. There are some people in the North American Indian Movement who are a bad influence on Canadian Indians.

One of the deals made with the Indian people has to do with the franchise. Whites promised that Indians who became enfranchised would be better off than those who lived on the reserve with no franchise. They would go strictly by white man's law, and make it on their own. The white man would not be responsible for them. The ones who did this thought they could go out and do as they pleased but found out this was not so; they had to live by the law, and learn to vote. It seemed better to remain with the people on the reserve. There, Indian people stayed Indian instead of trying to be white. They had hunting rights, being able to hunt or trap on any crown land on any day of the year according to the Indian Act, the agreement between the Canadian government and the Indian people.

Indians Along the Wapiti

Here is the story about the people within the South Wapiti area, the native people who came into the area between the late twenties and the present time.

During the depression, the hungry thirties, of course the Indian people were poor, as were a lot of people. They lived a pretty good way, though. They lived off the land and traded with various white people, who grew big gardens, for meat they shot and moccasins they made out of moosehide. A few of them had horses to get from one part to another when they moved on. They really didn't live too bad a life. They didn't have any fancy grub, they didn't have any fancy clothes, but they made their living the best they knew how. They were happy and there wasn't all that much sickness.

A lot of Indians went out in the South Wapiti district and worked as farmhands before power machinery came into use so much. Some worked during the summer, and many worked during harvest, stooking and threshing. Then the government decided to offer them welfare. Of course the Indians took advantage of it. "Why work if you don't have to!" they said. One such man was Joe Nease. He was well educated, worked for various farmers in the Wembley area and started several good things for his people. But then he got welfare and moved to the city of Grande Prairie; and he became worse off than he ever had been.

The Wilson Family

Joe Nease was a part of the Wilson family. There was Sam Wilson, and he married Mrs. Nease (maiden name Desjarlais). They moved into the South Wapiti area in the thirties and lived there and sometimes near Pinto Creek. They had one daughter named Helen. Mrs. Wilson by her previous marriage had Joe Nease and Harvey, although Harvey went under the name of Wilson.

Mrs. Wilson, being quite an elderly lady, died a natural death in the Grande Prairie Hospital and was buried in the Grande Prairie Cemetery. Sam lived with his daughter Helen and was killed in the late seventies as he was walking home along the Grovedale road. Helen had quite a large family.

The Wilsons lived in the area which is today known as the Metis Community. It was Joe Nease who got through to the Metis Association and had three quarters of land laid aside for the Indian people to live on. It is not agricultural land; they can have only a few acres each, a place for them to live and have a garden. After awhile, they left this land that had been laid aside for them and moved to Grande Prairie, and Indians came from other areas and occupied the land.

It was Joe Nease who helped to get a school going there, too. During the fifties a missionary by the name of Clarence Jaycox came into the area and talked to Joe Nease about a mission school. They went ahead and cut some building logs and built a mission on the Indian land, right on the corner by the main road. Jaycox lived there with his small family and taught as a missionary for a few years. Later another missionary came in by the name of Perry Hedger, and he was followed by Harold Gross, the final missionary to teach the Indian kids in that area.

After that, Northland School Division turned it into a public school and called it the Elk School. One gentleman who taught there was well known and respected by the Indians and his name was Jack McIntosh. Later the school shut down and the children bussed to Grovedale.

The only one that remains in the South Wapiti area is Harvey Wilson. He married Helen Wyniandi and raised quite a large family. During World War II he joined the armed services and was released due to some unfortunate misunderstanding. He lost his hand in a shooting accident. He has his piece of land in South Wapiti where he lives and makes his living off trapping and working out when he can find a job he can do with only one hand. He was one of those who saw the hard times in South Wapiti. Harvey has had a lot of tough luck throughout the years but is still the same old Harvey. He makes the best of everything that he knows how.

The St. Arnault Family

Dan St. Arnault was born at Wabamun Lake on October 9, 1889. He died December 28, 1954. Florence Ferguson was born April 9, 1893 in the Battle River area and raised in the mission at Grouard.

Dan was working for a survey gang and came west around 1906, returning to Lac St. Anne the same year. When his grandmother passed away he moved with his uncle Urbian Gladue to the shores of Flying Shot Lake and lived there until he and Florence were married in the early 1900's. They lived in this area for some years and trapped most of the time. When the Indian people lost the land at Flying Shot Lake, Dan and his uncle Urbian and the others moved to Kelly Lake, B.C. They remained in that area moving from one point to another, trapping mostly. During the summer months Dan would work for some farmer, brushing. He worked one or two years for a survey gang when the Alberta-B.C. boundary was being established.

The last time he worked for the B.C. Government was in 1930 brushing the right-of-way for the highway between Kelly Lake and Pouce Coupe, B.C. That summer his plans were to move to Fort Vermilion. He arrived in the town of Grande Prairie. Things happened there that happen to so many native people; he got drunk and went broke. He went to Lake Saskatoon for a few days and then to friends down at the Wembley Crossing on the Wapiti River. That was August, 1930. He was going to visit only a couple of days but he and his family remained in that area until early spring of 1938.

While they lived on the banks of the Wapiti River, during the break-up when the ferry could not operate, Dan would take the homesteaders from South Wapiti across the river in a rowboat. He trapped in the winter and worked for the Department of Highways, slashing right-of-way with an axe for a number of years.



Florence St. Arnault and Mima Osborne, along the Wapiti.

One of the St. Arnault boys, Jimmy, died of T.B. in Edmonton in 1937.

In the spring of 1938, Dan and son John went trapping rats. Florence and the girls moved across the river to visit a family they knew, the Kenny family. They remained there, building a log house beside the road. They lived there until Dan died.

One thing Dan St. Arnault did during those years was pack supplies for a man by the name of Alan Watts, who had a trading post way down south in an isolated district on the Porcupine River. There were various Indians that wintered there during the trapping season. Alan traded supplies for their furs; and Dan packed in these supplies. Dan would trap between trips and put in his winters in this fashion. This was during the late thirties.

In these years when they lived there, especially during the forties, Dan did a lot of packing for outfitter Carl Brooks. Carl lost his life in a plane accident in 1945; and Dan kept on packing and guiding for various outfitters throughout the area. He was working for Henry McCullough until two months before his death.

There were eleven children in the St. Arnault family in all, seven girls and four boys. Three boys and two of the girls had passed away, leaving five girls and one boy living. The five girls were all married before Dan passed away.



The Dan St. Arnault family and two Catholic priests.

Jean married a fellow by the name of Theodore Savard; they lived in the South Wapiti area. Madeline married a man by the name of Adolphus Beaulieu, who lost his life in a traffic accident in 1963. Josephine married a guy by the name of Marshall Cheneweth, who later died. Dorothy (Mima) married Don Johnson, who lost his life in a plane accident. Mary, the youngest girl, married Sandy Creighton; they live in South Wapiti.

John remained single for many years. After World War II broke out, he joined the army in March 1942. Two other natives from South Wapiti who joined the Armed Forces were Theodore and Leo Savard. They were all discharged in 1945. John went back to the army during 1953 to 1955 (peacetime army) and when he came out of this he went into the guiding business. After a few years of that and fire fighting, he became employed by Alberta Forest Service. He was with them for seasonal work during the summers at first, but finally it got to be a year round job. He was foreman for the standby crew and for roadbuilding, and was also training officer for the native firefighters.

During this time John was still single, and when not working away, he stayed with his mother. They moved into Wembley about 1964 and stayed there until his mother died on September 19, 1970. John stayed in Wembley with his sister for awhile and then moved to Grande Prairie.

Over the years, a drinking problem had developed. Finally he bettered himself and sobered up. He continued to work for Alberta Forest Service for a couple of years and then went to work for the Grande Prairie Friendship Center in 1972 as assistant manager. He remained there until June of 1974, when he was offered a job as a local worker with the Native Counselling Service of Alberta.

John did not know if he could do this job or not. He asked his superior officer, Neil Firman, about it. Mr. Firman was very frank and said it would be a promotion for John if he went to work for the Native Counselling Service. So John resigned his job as assistant manager of the Friendship Center and went to work for the Native Counselling Service of Alberta on June 15, 1974.

He went to Grant McEwan College and took a course on court work. He is still employed helping the native people who come in conflict with the law. He took other training to better himself in this position; so people that knew him back in South Wapiti say, "There's John St. Arnault. He has come a long way from skid row to such a position."

John's brother-in-law, Theodore Savard, was married to Jean St. Arnault before he joined the army in the early forties. He went overseas and returned in 1945, having lost a finger during the war. Theodore and Jean have a family, all of them now grown up. Theodore went to train with Procter and Gamble Cellulose about 1974. He is still with them and getting ahead in their woodlands operation. He has done various other jobs like operating the Pipestone Creek ferry for a number of years and, of course, he trapped during the thirties same as the rest of the natives. Theodore was raised in the Mission at Sturgeon Lake and lived in the Pinto Creek area with the Peter Shuttler family until he grew up and went on his own. He had one brother, Leo, who came to live with the Dan St. Arnaults in his younger years. When he became of age he joined the Armed Services, went overseas and served in Germany with the Occupational Troops. He returned home and rejoined the army in peace time. After a few years he got out. Now he is employed by Base Fort Security Patrol. He had done various other jobs. He was married but unfortunately this didn't work out. He has one daughter. He was one of those who saw South Wapiti the way it used to be in the hungry thirties to where it is today. He worked for farmers in South Wapiti some, and he worked for the Alberta Forest Service, too.

The Kenny Family

There was another family that lived along the Wapiti by the name of Kenny. An Indian sold his land at Lac St. Anne many years ago, and the interpreter there at the time did not know the young man, so she just gave him a name that came into her mind at the time, and called him Henry Kenny. The family was to live with that name for many years to come. The Kenny family lived around the Lac St. Anne and Grande Cache areas, living mostly off the land in those days. Henry Kenny married a girl by the name of Margaret that came from Hobbema and was a cousin to old Tomah (the old gentleman with the muzzle loader, whose story follows later). They lived in a teepee as was the custom of the Indians then, living in various places, trapping in the winter and living off the land. They arrived in the Rio Grande area and lived there for awhile, then moved to the Pinto Creek area and lived there. They had three sons with them. One died and was

buried at Pinto Creek. The two remaining sons were Adam, the oldest, and Baptiste. Baptiste married one of the Shuttler girls from the Horse Lake Reserve by the name of Alice. They never had a family.

Baptiste and Alice lived in the Pinto Creek area. It was quite a common place for Indian people to live, a good area where nobody bothered them. Baptiste died in the spring of 1937 and was buried at Pipestone Creek.

Adam Kenny married a white woman in the early 1940's and lived in South Wapiti and raised a family there. The children went to an Indian Mission School that was in the area, until they finally grew up. Then the whole family moved to Grande Prairie. Adam's dad, Henry Kenny, had passed away in 1939 and was buried at Pipestone Creek.

Getting back to the name of the Kenny family, there was a well educated gentleman who used to work for the Hudson's Bay Company at Lake Saskatoon by the name of Leo Ferguson. At the time when Henry Kenny was to get his old age pension, Leo started to look for Henry's birth certificate or baptism certificate and couldn't find either. He finally discussed the matter with Dan St. Arnault who came from that area in the early days, and Dan told Leo there was a possibility he was looking for the wrong name. So they started to trace back the steps of this Henry Kenny, back to the days when he sold his land scrip at Lac St. Anne. They found out they were actually looking for Henry Iskoty, so he drew the old age pension under that name. Then when he died, Mrs. Kenny, who was a Treaty Indian, enquired about the old age pension. The Department of Indian Affairs told her the best thing she could do was sell her treaty rights and draw the old age pension and she'd be better off. She did so under the name of Margaret Scotty.

John St. Arnault was walking down the road in the South Wapiti area one day about that time and met a police officer by the name of Constable Elliot who wanted to know where Margaret Scotty lived. John replied that he did not know of any Margaret Scotty living in the area. After talking a few minutes the Constable asked if John knew Adam Kenny. John said, "Yes, he lives about a mile up the road." Then the Constable asked, "Do you know his mother?" John said, "Yes," and the Constable said, "Well, that's Margaret Scotty."

John St. Arnault said, "No, that's not Margaret Scotty. You white men always have to change things to make it easier for you. Her name is Margaret Iskoty."

The Constable said, "All I know is what's on paper and that's who I'm looking for."

This Margaret Iskoty (Kenny) lived to be in her second childhood and used to take off and sometimes she wasn't found for two or three days. Farmers would take time off from their work to look for her. Finally it was getting so bad they had to call the police in. When they would find her she would always say she had gone to Hobbema to treaty days or a pow-wow. Eventually the police said they would have to take her to the old people's home in Edmonton and keep her there as there was no home in this area at the time. So she was taken down to Edmonton by bus by this young Constable. When they arrived at the bus depot in Edmonton, there was no one there to meet them. As the old lady understood English fairly well, the Constable told her to sit down and wait while he made a phone call. When he came back she was gone. They kept this pretty quiet, but after a few days the old lady showed up in Hobbema. No one knew who she was or where she came from, and so they reported it to the police. How she got out of the bus depot and to Hobbema, nobody knows. She was finally returned to Grande Prairie when they got an old people's home here. She lived to a ripe old age and when she died was buried in the Grande Prairie Cemetery.



Adam and Annie Kenny.

Adam Kenny is the only one that is left of the old Kennys, and he is getting up in years. He turned out to be a medicine man and still does a fair amount of travelling to various places where his medicine is required. He moved to Beaverlodge some years ago, and lives there with his wife, Annie.

The Chatelaine (or Shuttler) Family

On the banks of the Wapiti lived an old gentleman, a Beaver Indian. People knew him as Chatelaine. He was one of the early chiefs to come from the Horse Lake Reserve. The old gentleman did not wish to live anywhere but along the Wapiti. He lived there alone in a stick teepee like the Indians build. Finally Dan St. Arnault built him a cabin that was suitable to live in during the winter. The Department of Indian Affairs paid for it. Old man Chatelaine lived there for many years and finally passed on in the middle thirties.

A man by the name of Bert Osborne lived on the banks of the Wapiti, too. He was kind of an agent for Indian Affairs, looking after the Indians that did not live on the Reserve. When old Chatelaine passed on, Bert Osborne and the native people that lived there talked it over, that he should be buried on the flats of the river that he loved so well. They discussed it with officials and the spot where he was buried became an Indian burial ground. It was registered as the Pipestone Creek Indian Cemetery.



Pipestone Creek Cemetery.

Many people throughout the country, from near and far, have been laid to rest there. Some of the other people are Mrs. Marie Stoney, Albert Wyniandi, Louis Caracote, Baptiste Kenny, Henry Kenny, Peter Shuttler and his wife, Madelaine, and various Indian children.

Old man Chatelaine had had a large family; but by the time he lived along the Wapiti, there was only one son left, Peter Chatelaine, or Shuttler as many people said the name. He lived in the Pinto Creek area about 30 or 40 miles south of the Wapiti, and married Madelaine who originally came from Grande Cache. They had a fairly large family. All of them died except one son, who still lives in the area, Joe.

Peter used to run a small trading post for this Alan Watts who had the Pipestone Creek Store. In the winter months, before the time of registered traplines, a lot of Indian people used to go to the Pinto Creek area with a team and sleigh and spend the winter there. They trapped and put in a pretty good winter that way. Pete lived there and did very well. He had cattle, not too many, and horses, and nice meadows in which he put up hay, and did very well. He died a natural death about the latter part of 1960.

His son, Joe, remained at Pinto Creek and married Veronique Wyniandi from Grande Cache. They still live in this area and pretty well live off the land. Joe is still on the Treaty list. His children go to the school at Nose Creek where the Northland School Division put up a school for the Indian people who live in that area.

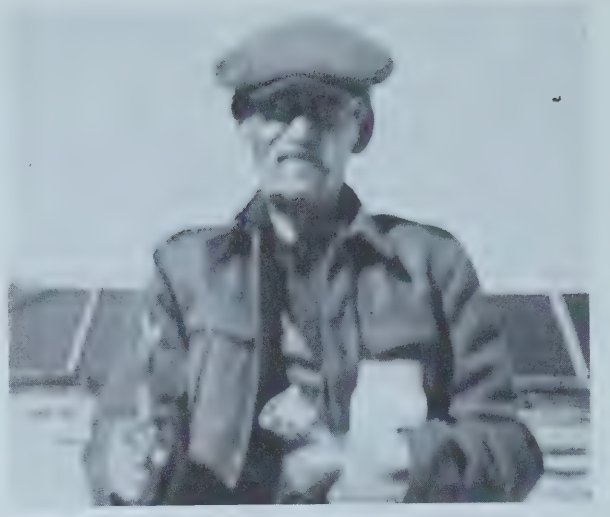


L. to R. Mrs. Pete Shuttler, Pete Shuttler, Theodore Savard, Mary Plante, Alice Jochum, Nora Ryan, Edith Ryan holding Michael. Front row; Betty Ryan, Joe Shuttler, and Lois Ryan. Taken at Jim Ryan's.

The Stoney Family

There was another old gentleman who lived along the Wapiti who was known as Tomah. He was Thomas Stoney to the Indian agents. He did not winter at the river, but went south about four miles, wintering in a stick teepee. He would spend the summer on the flats of the Wapiti, along with old Chatelaine, living for many years fairly close together. These two men did not get along too well, and yet they were good friends. Tomah Stoney would play jokes on the other old gentleman and vice versa.

Tomah Stoney had an old muzzle loader he used for killing his own ducks and rabbits. It blew up on him once and blew part of his hand off. He was taken to the hospital and came out not too bad, as he did not lose the hand entirely.



Tomah Stoney.

Bert Osborne had a red cow that would go to the old gentlemen's tents, when they were away, and chew up their blankets and stuff like that.

One day old Tomah loaded up his muzzle loader with salt and waited for the old red cow to come around. Sure enough, toward evening, the old cow showed up. Tomah let go with his muzzle loader full of salt, right in the hind end, and the cow put up her tail and was long gone. From that time on, whenever the cow recognized the old fellow, she would put her tail in the air and go in the other direction. The cow never bothered the two old gentlemen again.

Tomah Stoney had one son, Edward, who lived in the Pinto Creek area, but Tomah didn't want to live there with him. In later years, Ed Stoney moved onto the Reserve at Horse Lake and took his father, who was becoming quite old, with him. Old Tomah was probably in his early hundreds when he died peacefully in his sleep in 1946. He was buried at Horse Lake.

Edward Stoney was married to a sister of Madelaine Shuttler, by the name of Marie. She came from Grande Cache. (Originally, Tomah Stoney came from the Grande Cache area, too) They came north in the late 1920's and lived in the Pinto Creek area for many years until Ed's wife, Marie, died in the early forties. They had five girls that lived with them for many years; then they were put in the Grouard Mission and partially educated. The oldest girl was Maggie; then there was Caroline who died in 1945, Ida who just recently lost her life in a traffic accident in 1980 at Clairmont, Arlene McAllister who lived in Fairview, and Helen who passed away from T.B. in the Charles Camsell Hospital in Edmonton.

Ed remarried after the death of his first wife. He married Alice Sikannie and moved to the Horse Lake Reserve. He was a Treaty Indian. He lived in the Horse Lake Reserve area until he passed away of a natural death about 1956. Alice is still living at Horse Lake. They had one son that died in 1947 and was buried at Pipestone Creek.

The Wyniandi Family

There was another family that came from the Grande Cache area, the Albert Wyniandi family; and they lived in the Pinto Creek area and finally moved to South Wapiti

where the children went to school. They lived there until Albert lost his life in a traffic accident and was buried at Pipestone Creek. Mrs. Wyniandi still lives in the area although the children are all grown up and gone.

In his later years, old Albert was on social assistance most of the time, trapped a little and what not. He had an idea that an Indian did not have to buy the white man's liquor; so he set up a batch of home brew that he drank himself. He finally ran out, having made just a small pot of brew; and then an unfortunate thing happened to him. When the Watkins agent had been around, Albert had bought this Watkins detergent; and there was a bottle of it lying there, so he uncapped it and took a drink.

He dropped right there. His family thought that was the end of him; so one of the kids, that was not going to school, ran to get Pete McCullough. Mrs. St. Arnault was living near Pete's; and she was Grandma to everyone in the country and everyone went to her when something happened. John St. Arnault was home at the time too; and there was an old gentleman there by the name of Paul Wyniandi. John and Paul had been trapping down south together and were just home during the spring break-up before they went out again for the spring hunt. They all went down to Albert Wyniandi's to see what they could do.

Before they got there, a guy by the name of Harvey Hoole came by. He always heard that if a person takes a poison you give him a drink of milk and it will kill the poison; so they stuffed a can of milk down old Albert. Of course, this milk and the home brew and the detergent soured in there and cramped the old man. It seemed best to take him to a doctor. The only vehicle that was close by belonged to Jack McIntosh, the teacher at the school. John ran the mile to the school and told Jack about Albert.

Of course, the first question Jack asked was, "Is he drunk?" and John replied, "No, as far as I know, he wasn't drinking."

Jack dismissed school and drove over, got old Albert loaded in the back seat; and away they went to Grande Prairie. About half way between South Wapiti and Grande Prairie, the old lady started crying that Albert had quit breathing. They pulled up in front of the hospital and Jack, who was well-known in the area, ran in to the hospital and said to the nurse there, "I have a dead man out in my car. What shall I do with him?"

"Well," the nurse said, "if he is dead, we don't want him. Take him down to Jimmy Oliver." (the undertaker)

Jack said, "I'm not going to take him any place unless it is verified that he is dead by some registered nurse or doctor."

So they went out and checked on him and found he was still breathing. They got him into the hospital, undressed him and pumped him out. During the night he started singing in Cree, swearing in English, and causing quite a disturbance; and everyone was getting pretty annoyed with him. The hospital staff called for his wife, Marie, to come. When Jack McIntosh brought her in, the nurse asked him whether Albert was a drinking man.

"Well, I don't suppose he would turn a drink down," Jack said. "Why?"

The nurse replied, "I have never seen a man so stoned in all my life as he is."

When Jack saw John St. Arnault again he said, "You're a fine friend, you are. I thought you told me Albert wasn't drinking."

John replied, "Well, I didn't know that he was." They both agreed it was a good thing they didn't know he had been drinking, because if they had, the old man probably would have died as they wouldn't have done anything about it. Old Albert came out of it okay and was in pretty good health, but he took a second thought before taking a drink of detergent again.

The Nose Creek Settlement

In the Nose Creek area there was a small community of Indian people who came from down south. One, Dave Joachim, a Beaver Indian, originally came from the Horse Lake Reserve. He was a cowboy and did some travelling. After his mother and a brother passed away he was kind of roaming, and he ended up in Grande Cache.



Dave Joachim and Foster Van Schaick with moose trophy.

There he married a widow, who had earlier been married to another Joachim from that area. Her maiden name was Adeline Moberly. They lived in that area for many years and finally moved northward and got a trapline in the Sherman Meadow area, that is southwest of Grande Prairie. They lived there for a fair amount of years and finally moved northward again into the Nose Creek area. It was farther upstream from the present site known as Nose Creek. They trapped there and lived off the land. There was a general agreement and nobody bothered them. They finally moved downstream and lived at Shuttler Flats.

In 1945 there was a mass marriage at Pipestone Creek. People from as far away as Grande Cache came to marry. Ed Moberly married Virginia Joachim, Roddy Moberly married Ida Stoney and Alex Moberly married Amelia Joachim. They had about one week's celebration on the Wapiti Flats. The Osborne family, who lived there, had to throw out all their furniture to have a wedding dance in their living room for the newlyweds.

One of these couples, Dave Joachim's stepdaughter Amelia, who married Alex Moberly, went to live in the Nose Creek area; and then they had children. Another family who also moved there was known as the Caracote family, brothers Peter, Albert and Dan who came from the Porcupine area. Some of them still live at Nose Creek, although Mrs. Peter Caracote passed away and was buried at Grande Prairie, and the same with Dan Caracote. Peter Caracote had a large family, and after he became blind he stayed with his family and got social welfare assistance. Mrs. Dave Joachim is blind, too,



Mr. and Mrs. Alex Moberly, Mr. and Mrs. Dave Joachim, and Joe Shuttler.

though still in good health even though she is crowding 100 years. She draws old age pension as well as welfare assistance.

At one time, white men tried to get the Indians to move out of the Nose Creek Settlement; but the Indians didn't want to and they finally won. They white men were trying to use the excuse of getting children to a school. The Metis Association got involved with it, John St. Arnault being the president of the Grande Prairie Association, known as Local 165. John made a trip to Edmonton about the matter. He came back with a resource person by the name of Ernie Primeau. Between Ernie and John, they finally got the Northland School Division to come up with a pilot project of a school in the Nose Creek area. The school is still open; and the Indians are still living there.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Too often when a white man sees someone with dark hair and dark skin going down the street, he says, "There goes an Indian," without really knowing whether that person is actually an Indian according to law. As long as he speaks Cree he is "just an Indian," drunk and no good for anything. That same individual can go out in the bush and maybe shoot a rabbit, or chicken, or moose, and the first thing that somes up is, "Hey, he's not an Indian; he can't do that." Too many people who call themselves white are really pretty black inside. That is why they promise the Indians a lot of things and then take their land and rights away from them.

A lot of people come up to me and say, "You live like a white man," but I say, "No, I don't live like a white man. I live a white man's way; but how can I live like a white man when I'm not?" But not all Indians look at it that way; for many have been violated so much and get the blame when actually the white man pushed them around.

An example of what happened to the Indian can be seen in the Grande Cache area. There was a man who led his people there by the name of Abraham Moberly. When Jasper became a park, these Indians had been forced to move out of the park area. So Abraham Moberly brought these people with him into what is known as the Grande Cache area. He had a big trading post. He looked after his people and they prospered there. They weren't rich by a long shot; they had hard times but they were doing okay. Then when Abraham Moberly died, he seemed to take the store with him. His family simply could not run it, as they were not business type people. They gave up everything and soon they had no store. Then they had to make the six-day ride by horseback to Entrance whenever they needed supplies.

Then a man by the name of Fletcher Smith came from Hinton Trail and ran a trading post. He made it pay for himself. For flour that cost $2.50 he would charge about $10; for tea worth 45¢ he charged $1.50. However, other than that, the people were still doing pretty well there at Grande Cache.

Finally, the white man pushed in and set up a mining town. In the old days you could look up at the hills and see wild horses and cattle and so on, but today there is not even a rabbit moving in the country because of pollution from the mine and the town.

Now the Indian people at Grande Cache have nothing. Oh sure, they still have their log houses to live in, and the opportunity is there for a job if they want it; but there is no freedom any more. McIntyre Porcupine Mine took that whole country down there, set up the town and left the Indian stranded.

Within all the Indian areas, people have come and gone through the years; but some of the old families remain. In the South Wapiti area things have become mixed up the same as everywhere. Everyone used to know one another; now they don't. With those that live on the Metis land there, either in log houses or trailers, there seems to be a conflict as to who owns what.

Some of the people would like to live in the old ways, but with all the activity going on now, there is just no game to be had. You can't go and camp any place any more and live there for as long as you please. The law says that you can't and the Indian people feel that this is unfortunate; but the old days are gone and the Indians just have to make the best of the new ones. They have to go according to law even if they are not under the Indian Act. They have to try to make the best they can with the white man's ways by getting a job or some assistance that is available.

Yes, the old days are gone and never will be again. The Indians signed the old days away, often times for something that is in a bottle; and that is what will keep on robbing them unless they do something about it. They have got to start looking after themselves, because the white man won't and has no business to, either. If the Indians don't do this, there will come a time in the not too distant future when there will be no Indians.

The following are some excerpts from local newspapers concerning some of the people or relatives of those mentioned in this chapter of "Along the Wapiti". The first is from the Grande Prairie Herald and the rest from the Northern Tribune.

June 14, 1934 - A large number of Indians from the Porcupine River paid a visit to Wembley recently. Dave Joachim, in charge of the party, says he successfully arranged the sale of 75 moose hides. Muskrats have been scarce this spring on the Porcupine and Pinto Creeks and very little fur has come from these points.

September 12, 1935 - Marian Sanders and Dan St. Arnault left on September 2 with five pack horses carrying the tools and equipment to build a post for A.K. Watts on the Porcupine. This trading post, carrying a complete line of trappers' supplies and groceries, will open November 15. Henry Joachim put up hay along the Porcupine River for the pack outfit that will be taking supplies to the Post.

October 3, 1935 - William Joachim of Pipestone Creek died at Grande Prairie on October 3rd. He was a Treaty Indian.

October 17, 1935 - Moccasin telegraph reports that Henry Joachim is enroute to Pipestone Creek with 17 head of pack horses. Big Henry has secured the contract to pack a ton of flour to the Porcupine Trading Post.

March 12, 1936 - Adam Kenny had an exciting experience with a caribou along the Cutbank River. The caribou dropped from a shot that had grazed its backbone. Thinking the animal dead, Adam went down on showshoes and found it very much alive. There ensued a struggle in which Adam's snowshoes were torn off and also the caribou's horns. Adam then grabbed one ear, and with the other hand managed to get out his pocket knife with which he was able to dispatch the enraged beast.

Supplies are leaving for Ft. Porcupine where trappers are waiting for relief from their moosemeat diet. The outfit, consisting of 10 head of horses, is in the charge of Dan St. Arnault assisted by Pete Shuttler, who is supplying some of the horses.

August 6, 1936 - (Part of a letter to the Tribune by Count Nicholas Ignatieff, who organized a trip through the mountains for some college students, under the guiding of Bert Osborne)....Adam Kenny, Mr. Osborne's Indian guide, proved an excellent fellow with the happiest of dispositions. In places he had great difficulty in finding any trail whatsoever. Time and again he took us through with a trail of any kind, and here and there had to do considerable cutting.

February 3, 1938 - Several sleighloads of trappers and a dogteam arrived at the Pipestone Creek Store on Tuesday. The barn and bunkhouse were filled to capacity. Guests included: John Napolean, Joe Joachim, Mrs. B. Kenny, Mr. and Mrs. Sikannie and daughter Virginia, Joe Nease, Mrs. Wilson and daughter Helen, and Harvey Wilson.

A recent visitor to Pinto Creek was Leo Ferguson, responsible for securing the old age pension for Martin (Henry?) Kenny, father of Adam, now over 70 and blind. Well over 30 years ago, Martin Kenny, then successful guide and outfitter, received the sum of $4,000 for guiding surveyors through the mountains to Peace River country. These surveyors were looking for a possible road for one of the big transcontinental railways.

February 16, 1939 - Adam Kenny, famous Indian guide and trapper was asked some time ago whether he was married, and his reply was, "Not quite." In an interview yesterday Adam confessed that he is now "altogether married." The bride is Miss Annie Sask. The happy couple were driven to Grande Prairie by Lawrence Osborne and the ceremony performed at St. Joseph's Church by the Rev. Father McGuire.

February 16, 1939 - Old Stoney, the veteran Indian who remembers the Peace River country as mainly forest when buffalo wandered at will, is now approaching his 110th birthday. Old Stoney, who finds it hard to get along on his Department rations of $3.70 a month, was looking rather thinned down.

"Belly empty," said Stoney, rubbing his abdominal regions. "Dog him fat," he added, pointing to his faithful pothound. The reference was that the Indian Department still insists on issuing him rolled oats which he cannot eat and is therefore obliged to feed his dog.

Just at this moment in the conversation some pack horses passed the store window. "Miayson mitsu," (good eats) said old Stoney, looking hungrily at the horses. The old gentleman recalled how some 25 years or so ago he spent a long hard winter way back in the foothills. Snow was so deep a long hard winter way back in the foothills. Snow was so deep that travel was impossible. There was no game, no flour, no tea. He had gone into the bush with his family and all their horses. Reluctantly, they ate the horses, one by one, till all seven were gone.

January 4, 1940 - 45 year old Sam Wilson, an Indian living near Pipestone Creek, was out hunting about 16 miles south of the Wapiti River last Friday, when he came across a bear in her den.

"I fired from a 30.30 rifle and broke the bear's lower jaw," Sam reported. "This was lucky for me. I fired again but missed. The bear was coming towards me. I reached into my coat pocket for a shell and re-loaded but the gun mis-fired. By this time the bear, which was mad, was very close to me. I struck it in the face with my rifle and knocked it down. It was up in a second and threw me down and gashed my head and face and tore nearly all the clothes off me. The bear, thinking I was dead, stopped clawing me for a minute. I jumped up and ran through a thick clump of willows. The bear tried to follow me but got stuck between two big trees. I kept right on going till I arrived at my hunting cabin."

J. McCullough fetched Wilson to the River on Saturday afternoon; and A.L. Osborne applied first aid and then took him to Dr. Carlisle in Grande Prairie by car.

May 1, 1941 - Indians are already starting their spring trek to civilization. They have moved from Ft. Porcupine to Nose Creek, some 60 miles south of here, reports Pete Shuttler. Pete, well-known guide and successful trapper, who has a ranch at Pinto Creek, 30 miles south, operates a trading post for the Pipestone Creek Store during the winter.

April 23, 1942 - The return of Alex Shuttler's dogs to Pinto Creek some short time ago caused alarm in view of the fact that he was one of the best bush men and hardiest trappers in the north country. Alex had, however, been in a car smash the previous summer and was known to be not so husky as his usual self. He was already overdue and had failed to come in with his after-Christmas catch. Under the direction of Uncle Pete, a search party set out and made directly for his usual haunts in the foothills near Nose Mountain. Some days later his body was found by Sam Wilson near an abandoned cabin, outside which he had made camp. He had fallen close to the campfire, the remains of which were found under the snow. Although foul play is not suspected, the cause of death is unknown. Following a long journey of over 80 miles to report the death, a party of Indians returned to the scene of the tragedy to bring the body to Pinto Creek by pack horse, where burial took place.

(Ed. note. Some of the Indian names are difficult for white men to spell. We have chosen one spelling from several in use for some families, and though we may not be correct, we have tried to be consistent.)

Saskatoon Mountain to the Wapiti River

by Stan Boyd

This is a short history of the area between Saskatoon Mountain and the Wapiti River, a really small part of the Peace River country and comprising three east and west roads which have seen much travel since they were

surveyed in 1910, and even before when the area was the avenue of much travel, especially since the Pine Pass was discovered in 1871.

To understand the many pecularities and features of this and other parts of the country, geologists tell us that in ages, eras, and epochs past, the whole McKenzie and Mississippi valleys and water sheds have been under three different oceans, namely the Gulf of Mexico, (Atlantic Arctic, and Pacific Oceans. These no doubt have produced the fossil fuel that is being tapped these days. Then later there were great warm fresh water jungles which when they became over-laden by sediments and glacial action, became the coal beds that are so prevalent.

Salt water, as in oceans, had the faculty of sorting certain minerals and substances and isolating them in beds such as salt beds at Fort McMurray, gypsum deposits in Wood Buffalo Park, and huge deposits of low grade iron ore in different parts of the country.

Geologists now have found that on the basic rock formation and under all of the above mentioned, lie seams of deposits of super heated hot water closer to the surface in the territories where it breaks out into Hot Springs.

There were possibly three glacial periods, the last of which was between eight and ten thousand years ago and missed certain areas (namely the Yukon and Alaska) and had used up so much ocean water that certain shallows such as Bering Straits became bare ground and allowed wild life and humans to migrate from Asia to North America. This migration did not happen in a hurry, but by about five hundred years go, this country was ready for the advent of the white man.

They came from Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca in search of furs in the 1790's. In 1792, Alexander McKenzie and party of the North West Company arrived and wintered at the junction of the Peace and Smoky rivers. In the late spring, they embarked on the voyage to the Pacific.

They found the country rich and bountiful and in 1805, Simon Fraser arrived on the scene and proceeded to establish a chain of forts or trading posts on the rivers from Chipewyan to Fraser Lake. About this time, the great prairies south of Dunvegan became interesting. As there were many French men among the Northwesterners, the prairies became "Le Grande Prairie". Herds of buffalo and elk roamed the grasslands and parklands all over the Peace country, and soon the making of pemmican became an industry as it was the diet of the canoe brigades, the trapper, and the explorer, and was shipped to the Fraser River country as there were no buffalo, moose, or elk there at that time.

The Hudson Bay Company bought out the North West Company in 1821 and all seemed quiet until the 1870's when things began to happen. The horse had arrived in the country. The Arrowsmith map had been published and was remarkably accurate for its time. The repeating rifle had been invented and was under production in 1871. In 1871, Joe Hunter had discovered the Pine Pass. The transcontinental railroad became an urgency. Horetzky and Macoun had been detailed to explore a route from Fort Simpson to Edmonton and report on the feasability of a survey. They reported it as worthy of a survey and also reported having seen no human after leaving Fort George until their arrival at Dunvegan.

W.F. Butler made the same trip from east to west about this time and in 1879, Dr. G.M. Dawson travelled the route from west to east with a party of 100 horses and mules, and made a geological and topographical study of the route. There were several other parties which travelled the route, but so much data has been lost and other data is incomplete.

There was however, much travel in winter carrying leather (buckskin, moose, and deer hides), and pemmican from Dunvegan to the Fraser Country. The canoe brigades often did not supply enough and of course there were no buffalo and no moose as yet in the Fraser Country.

In 1896, the whole continent became greatly concerned with the Klondike gold rush. Edmonton was thought to be an ideal point of departure and this created a great boom for Edmonton for about six years. Then it was all over.

The reason for mentioning all these trips and expeditions is that many of them travelled through the very district we are about to speak of. The only sources of water between Bear Creek and the Beaverlodge River were the springs at Patterson's, Rains, and Flints, these three being the ones who later homesteaded at the springs.

Other travellers were Jim Brooks and party of seven who wintered on the river about one and a half or two miles south of Sherks on the east side of the river. Some of the party were suffering from scurvy and it's reported that two died. I saw their sandstone cabin with built-in fire place in the early twenties. The roof was gone and the clay mortar washed out by rain from between the stones.

It apparently can't be found today and possibly was washed away by floods as it was about 150 feet from the actual river. Another traveller was found in 1915 about one mile south of the present highway and west of Canyon Creek. His identity and direction of travel are unknown. Among the remains were a flint lock pistol and some brass buttons which are probably there yet.

Before the turn of the century, a Hudson Bay Post was established west of the Adair Ranch by Thomas Kerr and was rightfully enough named Beaverlodge. All creeks running down both sides of Saskatoon mountain had as many beaver dams or lodges as the elevation or sites would permit. The great fire of 1902 ruined the beaver country and the post was moved to what was to become Albert Smith's homestead, almost one half mile north of the present Lake Saskatoon Cemetery, still retaining the name Beaverlodge.

Leon Ferguson was a factor of both these posts, but not the first. Alex Monkman arrived in the country in 1899 and in 1902, built the Bredin and Cornwall post on the site of Beaverlodge, or what was to later become the townsite of Lake Saskatoon. He operated the same until 1906.

1906 and 1907 was the worst winter that ever hit the west. It covered the whole west from the Great Lakes to the mountains. It eliminated the moose until 1911, the elk until the early 1930's and the mule deer until the early 1920's.

From 1907 until 1914 the area saw a great influx of settlers. Those who came after 1912 had to be content with very inferior homesteads. Land clearing equipment was not so sophisticated as it is today. From here on we will be concerned only with the settlers who homesteaded in the area we were to speak of in the first place. There have been good histories written of most other areas of the country.

Henry Patterson was the first settler in the area in 1907 with Alex Muir in 1908. A certain diary shows them both

to be at a certain place in July 1908. Henry squatted on what the survey in 1910 was to prove to be section 29, a school section. They merely allocated a quarter section one mile south of it to replace it. I have often thought it remarkable that the first settler in the country, before a survey, should select a site right on the present highway and close to the railway.

Alex Muir did not settle at that time but the early summer of 1909, he walked to Rolla, Pouce Coupe, and Dawson Creek, but decided against that part of the country on account of the water difficulty and the distance. On the way back, he met Bob Beaman going by foot to Pouce Coupe. Bob turned back and they both homesteaded in 1910 near by Patterson. Bob was among the first in the whole country to have his quarter all broke up except a bluff in the corner which sheltered the building site. Then like so many others after obtaining title, he walked away and left it. Other early settlers were the Watsons, Heber West, the three Boyd brothers (Charles, Joe, and Ben), Flood, William Hosker, Dick Cellars, Jim Howard, Gordon Cox, T.B. Nash, Gilmour family, Wadell, Bill Bruce, Longhurst Deans and daughter Rose Meyers, John Shodene and Weaselskin Scott. Silvertip Campbell bought a section of scrip and filed on a homestead next to the west side of the Wembley townsite, obtained title to all and left the country.

Scott had been a trapper in the west Pine country and in 1910, brought his fur to Beaverlodge (Lake Saskatoon). He had heard of the development. Had quite a bundle of fur, part of which was over 600 weasels. Hence the name, Weaselskin Scott.

He filed on a quarter section and in a few years obtained title to same and has never been seen or heard of since. He brought the news of the coal seams on the Pine and Sukunka rivers.

Others were Myron Stewart, George Gordon, John Stratton, Mills family, Matt Graham, George Miller, Bill Blair, and Ben Austin. Bill Gardner filed in 1913, enlisted in 1915, and went overseas. He came back and filed on the adjoining quarter as soldier grant and in 1926, abandoned both. Eden Thorsen, Bill Romkey, Jim McDonald, John Cochrane, Jim Bauman, Gordon Cameron, Jake and John Stegmeier and Benson were in the present Huallen area. Sherks, Waltons, Hugh Allen, Sislers and McDonalds were in lower Beaverlodge area and earlier Frank Alexander and George Automatic Campbell took over the McDonald property. They were big game guides from Wyoming. They tried fox farming for a while and by 1916, had left the country. Others were Homer and Floyd Jacque, Hugh Ross, Bill and Roy Bernard and Jake Glessner.

My parents and sister Helen and I, with uncle Gordon Cameron, arrived at Lake Saskatoon, August 1913, and spent that winter and the next summer on George Thornton's homestead three quarters of a mile south of the townsite.

In mid 1914, Father filed on a quarter on Canyon Creek and in 1916, he traded homesteads with Henry Patterson and moved there. My first recollections were of the many buffalo skulls lying about the spring. I later thought they might have been twenty years old. Much later, I learned that the buffalo had become extinct all over the Peace country both north and south in 1906.

Many flint arrowheads, spears, lance points, and hatchets were discovered over the years on the hillside and the road allowance. Some were of perfect symmetry balance and still sharp. We later concluded that the skulls were the result of buffalo being killed at the spring. Many buffalo wallows were noted in the area as also were the trails worn deep into the prairie. When a trail merged into a grain field, the trail could be seen across the field as the grain grew taller and greener.

1916 saw another influx of settlers come by train to Grande Prairie and thence to the area. They had to be content with inferior land as the best was long gone. Wilsons, Woods, Eisenmans, and Henrys were among those who settled along the Flying Shot road. On the Richmond road were Reith, Wesley Bell and family, P. Wilson, Jell Russell, Dunc Humes, Varehaus, and Ferguson.

On the Mountain Trail were Benson Jeffrey family, Bill Moss, and Hazzards. On the very fore peak of the mountain was Grier and family. On the north side were Green and son, and son-in-law Gustafson.

On the south side of the trail were Frank Janson, Wilms and family, Walter Erby, Porter Hoover, and Ed Parks, Bill Russel and parents and on the far east end of it were Ralph Thompson and family. Ralph was the druggist in Lake Saskatoon and was the first victim of the flu epidemic.

When the veterans who survived the war came back in 1919, they were confronted with the first of three cruel winters and were in the midst of the flu. Between winters, there were late springs, summer drought, frosts, and often a plague of grasshoppers. Feed shortages and auction sales, which averaged five per week at one time throughout the whole country, became very demoralizing to those who couldn't leave or wanted to stay, and to those newly arrived.

By 1926, a group of people of German descent who had been studying the country and the accomplishments of Herman Trelle, shipped in and bought up many abandoned farms. They were fully equipped and accustomed to the life and had three good years ahead of them before the depression. Many were talented and all seem to have succeeded.

It is very gratifying to see that in three quarters of a century, the century has evolved from the ox-propelled, covered and uncovered wagon to the Cadillac era. The farmer can now live in town and step into his air conditioned, radio telephone equipped pick-up or car, drive on pavement to his farm, and step or climb into his tractor or combine in perfect comfort. No cattle or horses to care for, or to spread weeds.



Settlers crossing the Wapiti on a raft; Sundin, Carl Berg, Ole Berg, ? ?.



The ferry at Pipestone Creek.



Harold McCullough and Mona Pearson crossing the river on the cable.



The Wapiti River, 1933.

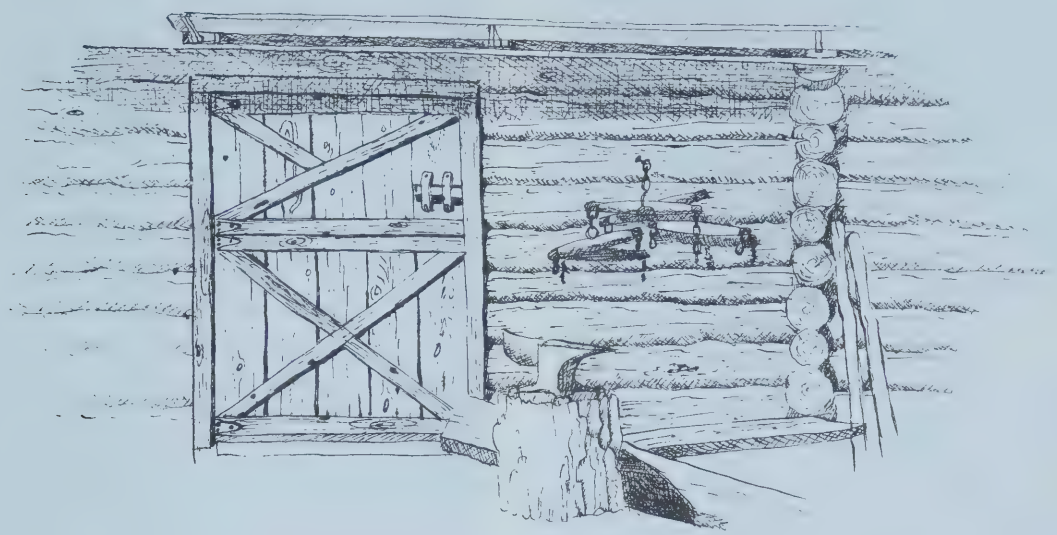


Grovedale Ferry.



Ferry washed up and tower knocked down after ice went out in 1935.

Chapter 2: Aspen Dale



Aspen Dale School District #4792

by Martha (Hennig) Gitzel

The local newspaper reported in September, 1937: "The western portion of the present Aspen Ridge School District together with certain lands in unorganized territory to the south and west has been organized to form a new school district. Meeting in the Aspen Ridge School last Saturday, the ratepayers of the proposed district voted almost unanimously to go ahead with the project. After balloting on six names nominated, the following were elected as trustees: Frank Gass, Roland S. Young, and Philip Hennig. This new district became Aspen Dale School District #4792."

Another news report in March, 1938 stated: "The Board of the Grande Prairie School Division met at the Court House to iron out problems in school business. Problems confronting the Board in the matter of schools and sites in the Aspen Ridge, Aspen Dale and Pipestone Creek districts were dealt with at some length. All three districts were reported cooperating commendably to overcome their difficulties and it was felt by the Board that the situation in those districts would soon be arranged for successful operation. A new school would have to be built in either of the first two districts and a site decided on."

From a July, 1938 newspaper we find that "The old Aspen Ridge school is now on the new Aspen Dale site, the southeast corner of NE 21-70-9-W6. Five tractors were used in moving the school from its former site. Mr. Johnson, the contractor, is now putting in the concrete foundation."

So the Aspen Dale school came into being, ready for use in the fall of 1938.

The following is a list of the teachers from 1938-1958, after which the school was closed and the children vanned to centralized schools. In 1938-39 Martha Hennig was the teacher. From 1939 to 1946 the teachers were: Martha (Hennig) Gitzel 1939-40, Mrs. Violet Evans 1940 (April to June), Hillis R. Stratton 1940-41, Mrs. Martha Gitzel 1941-43, Mrs. W.H. Young 1943-46. In 1946-47 Miss B. M. Juneau was the supervisor. From 1947 to 1950 Mrs. Florence Russell taught. In 1950-51 Mrs. J. Smith was the supervisor. Miss Annie Chugg was the supervisor in 1951-52. From 1952 to 1954 there were the following teachers: Miss Elvira Wiens, Mr. P.J. Moynihan, Miss Lorena McLaughlin (supervisor) and Miss Phyllis Larson (till 1955). Erika Scheerschmidt was the teacher from 1955 to 1958. The attendance for these years ranged from 19 to 40 pupils.



Back row: Lydia Thomsen, Trude Sieker, Mary Stierlie, Laura Sieker, Hazel Penny, Lloyd Willsey, Adolf Schultz.
Next row: Herta Schultz, Roy Pollack, Herman Reinitz, Louise Willsey, Ivy Willsey, Keith Penny, Emily Thomsen.
Sit Down Row: Alma Nagel, Donna Penny, Pearl Deering, Earl Willsey, Katie Reinitz, Ernie Reinitz, Wolf Rautenstrauch, Johnny Thomsen.
Next row: ? ?, Doug Penny, Olga Schultz, Margaret Penny, Ed Thomsen, Marie Deering, Georgina Gitzel, ? ?, ? ?, ? ?.
Front row: Leonard Heikel, ? ?, Isobelle Penny, Curtis Marth, ? ?, Myra Heikel.



Aspen Dale. Back row: Hans Sieker, Werner Marth, Margaret Hennig, Viola Willsey, Georgia Kaufman, Dorothy Grubb, Glen Grubb, Sig Hennig, Jack Willsey.
Middle row: Lloyd Willsey, Adolf Schultz, Hazel Penny, Jean Paverly, Bertha Schultz, Lore Sieker, Bill Schultz, Leona Zelling, Jean Willsey, Albert Paverly, Bert Grubb.
Front: Ernie Reinitz, Herman Reinitz, Dick Paverly, Keith Penny, Herta Schultz, Mary Stierle, Louise Willsey, Trude Sieker, Ivy Willsey.

Pupils registered over the years 1938 to 1958 were as follows: Siegfried Hennig, Margaret Hennig, Werner Marth, Leona Zelling, Viola Willsey, Jack Willsey, Glen Grubb, Dorothy Grubb, William Schultz, Bertha Schultz, Jean Willsey, Jean Paverly, Bert Grubb, Hans Sieker, Lore Sieker, Albert Paverly, Richard Paverly, Hazel Penny, Adolf Schultz, Lloyd Willsey, Herman Reinitz, Mary Stierle, Louise Willsey, Ernet Reinitz, Ivy Willsey, Trude Sieker, Herta Schultz, Irma Brauer, Georgia Kaufmann, Olga Stierle, Donna Penny, Pearl Deering, Katie Reinitz, Olga Schultz, Earl Willsey, Wolfgang Rautenstrauch, Emma Bull, Lawrence Childs, Eva Rautenstrauch, Myra Heikel, Marie Deering, Alma Nagel, Valentine Mayer, Joan Penny, Margaret Penny, John Thomsen, Emmaline Thomsen, Lydia Thomsen, Henry Schmitke, Laura Golnick, Albert Polack, Roy Polack, Hildegard Lange, Robert McRae, Leonard Heikel, Isabel Penny, Edward Thomsen, Curtis Marth, Anton Briese, Daniel Golnick, Melvin Golnick, Evelyn Grams, Carl Grams, Jackie Heikel, Marlene Heikel, Paul Heikel, Lorraine Hennes, Ronnie Pearson, Douglas Penney, Natalie Stierle, Ellen Willsey, Englebert Nagel, Jimmy Ulmer, Kenneth Schultz, Robert Schultz, Luella Willsey, Elizabeth Golnick, Theodor Golnick, Ernest Roth, Ernestine Roth, Edward Grams, Shirley Ann Schadeck, David Willsey, Norman Grams, Dorothy Heikel, Esther Schadeck, Attilie Briese, Lawrence Heikel, Ruth Schadeck, Robert Heikel, June Heikel, Dorothy Nagel, Edmund Stierle, Erika Briese, Erna Grams, Louis Heikel, Albert Stierle, Ewald Briese, Rose Grams.

Over the years 1938 to 1958 the superintendents were: H.A. Walker, C.B. Johnson, J.B. Stan Hambly, R.E. Byron, J.E. Sheppy, C.G. Merkley, Mr. McArthur, R.E. Rees, and N.J. Andruski.

Notes on "This and That" or "As It Was Then" - taken from Country files of the Aspen Dale School, 1938-60.

1940 - Repairs needed on road in front of school - requested by the secretary, C. Hennig. September - Complaint - 27 pupils and only "26 seats". H.R. Stratton, Georgia Kaufman to supply the water.

1941 - Secretary, Mrs. Anne Willsey corresponded with Division re: painting of school and renailing the siding. Also there was a need for a fireguard on west and north sides of school, because tall grass and heavy bush are a fire menace. Usual complaint - matters were taken out of our hands so school property maintenance does not get done.

1942 - Philip Hennig built a barb wire fence around Aspen Dale schoolyard. Request was made for a water cistern at the school - nearest water supply is three miles away.

1945 - January 11, 1945 - Resolution to Division, moved by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. F. Willsey. Carried unanimously. "Resolved that School Divisions urge upon the Government a plan, whereby a part of the post-war reconstruction plans include the modernization of Rural Schools, to bring them up to the standards of schools in urban centres." They were advised by Betty Tissington, Division secretary, that Alberta School Trustees are already working on such a plan.

1957 - February 28, meeting a "flop" only three ratepayers turned out. Inspector Hodson and Councillor Smith attended. The object was to feel out the ratepayers revanning the children, on account of the shortage of teachers. After much discussion the conclusion was that vanning was the only alternative.

September, 1958 - School closed for good.

1959 - Rev. Jacob Rossnagel, purchased the old dilapidated piano for $30. July 10, 1959 - Teacherage sold for $512, and barn for $112, by tender to Mr. Fred Golnick.

July, 1960, - Request that the Aspen Dale School should not be sold, but be left for a community centre. County #1 granted the request. On February 5, 1962 the Aspen Dale and Aspen Ridge Community Club purchased the school and site for one dollar, plus the transfer costs. Transfer was refused by the Registrar since Transferee is not in good standing. The Club has apparently not been making the annual returns required. After the club was brought into good standing approval was granted on February 8, 1962.

The Aspen Dale School served as a community centre until 1979. Then the Community Club sold the school house and the site separately, by tender. The school was purchased for $510 by Mr. Shier and moved to his farm, one and a half miles north, for a granary. Mr. Howard Mayer bought the site of 2.87 acres for $5300. He has resold it to developers who moved a house on to it. They are advertising it for sale for $70,000. "Is there a gold mine there?"

Anyway, it saddens one to see these rural schools disappearing - we have only memories left, most of them happy ones. No one can take those away from us.

Anderson, Bullas, and Kaufman Story

by Leonard Kaufman

My grandfather and grandmother, Jacob E. and Julia A. Anderson, along with their daughter Alice, who was married to an Englishman by the name of John Bullas, started their trek to Canada in 1917. No doubt the idea of going to Canada stemmed from the knowledge of John Bullas, who would naturally be acquainted with opportunities that were offered, so they left Oklahoma and went north, arriving in what is now known as the Wembley district. John Bullas homesteaded SW 6-71-8-W6 and the Andersons NE 21-70-9-W6.



Jack and Alice Bullas.



Leonard, Mother, and Georgia Kaufman.



Grandma Anderson, Alice Smith, Alice Bullas, Seated: Dick Smith and the dogs.



Grandpa Anderson with Peggy and Nell.

My mother, along with my sister Georgia and I, joined them in 1931, leaving Kansas City by train with stopovers in St. Paul, Minnesota, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and Edmonton, Alberta; finally arriving in Wembley in early spring. The train trip between Edmonton and Wembley wasn't quite as colorful when we travelled it as it was when my grandparents made the trip.

I remember them telling about the part along the Slave Lake section when the train crew held the cars upright with poles and all the passengers walked behind and picked berries along the way. That was when the E.D. and B.C. railroad was known as the "Eternally Damned and Badly Constructed", not the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia.

It is hard to say just what my impression of the country was at that time, not knowing what was ahead. A 15 year old doesn't take too much time to evaluate the present surroundings. It didn't take too long before I realized that the situation wasn't the same as it was when good old Dad was supplying the staples. Sometimes I wonder how we made it. Like I said though, good neighbors and King George's beef sure did help.

I just couldn't believe how small the little log cabin on Grandpa's homestead was until we were up there that summer and we went to see it. As I sit here, at the present time in our dining room, it suddenly occurs to me that the dining room is larger that that whole cabin was.

Mrs. Bullas always had an exceptional garden. She believed in planting by the different phases of the moon, which a lot of people scoff at.

Grandpa, Grandma, Mother and Aunt Alice were all born in Kentucky, and Jack in England. Georgia and I were both born in Kansas.

Grandma Anderson died in 1932, and Grandpa in 1935.

We left the homestead in 1939. I moved to Grande Prairie, where I clerked in a grocery store for a period and then worked for the United Grain Growers in Huallen and High Prairie before leaving Canada in 1947 to move to Astoria, Oregon, U.S.A.

Mother lived in Astoria for a period, after leaving Canada, then she decided to go to Calgary to be close to where Georgia lived, passing away there in the late 1960's.

Georgia and husband have a family of three children, two boys and one girl and live in Calgary.

I, Leonard, and wife have one son and one daughter and still live in Astoria.

Alice Bullas passed away in the Grande Prairie Hospital of cancer at 57 years of age on July 14, 1944. Jack Bullas passed away in the Beaverlodge Hospital at the age of 72 on June 19, 1961.

The Art Bateman Family

by Marie Bateman

Art was born and raised at Innisfail. I was born at Wetaskiwin and raised on a farm at Brightwien, west of Wetaskiwin. Our son, Robert, was born at Innisfail on October 3, 1960, where we lived until we sold the farm there.

We first saw our present farm on August 21, 1961. After meeting Mr. and Mrs. Otto Schadeck and driving around the farm, we told the Real Estate Agent we would take it. He advised us to think it over for the weekend so after visiting with my sister and family over the weekend (which was just as well as Art celebrated his 21st birthday the day before we signed the papers), we returned to Grande Prairie and signed the papers to buy the farm.

We moved up by truck, beginning in November and bringing the final load on December 15. Art's dad came up with the load of cattle and 1 horse, also to milk the cows and do the chores while Art went back for the last of the furniture, Robert and I. Cold weather stepped in and Grandpa spent a week or so on his own before we could join him.

Robert was 14 months old when we moved in and David was born the following spring, March 7 (his Grandpa Bateman's Birthday), 1962, at Grande Prairie thanks to Adolph T. Schultz and his new car.

Our first impression, of course, was great. Art had said he wanted to see the mountains and we have one of the nicest views from anywhere.

The neighbours were great. When we were bringing the first load up, I phoned my sister at Bonanza and they said they would come down and have the house warm and a meal ready when we arrived. When they drove in, they were followed in a few minutes by Adolph Schultz. Knowing no one was living here and not recognizing the vehicle, he was just checking up. This is the sort of neighbours we have been lucky to have and coming from Central Alberta where alot of the real neighbourliness has gone by the wayside it has always been appreciated. Adolph and Margret and Bill and Lydia Schultz, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Heikel, Melvin and Rose Willsey, Ronald and Jean Penny, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Roth and family were frequent visitors. We seemed to gather for card games and drop in on one another frequently for coffee and a visit.

Teresa arrived February 15, 1966 at Grande Prairie and Airan September 10 (Grandma Rossiter's birthday), 1967.

The children have all attended Wembley school. Robert graduated from Beaverlodge High in 1978 and Dave is taking his high school in Beaverlodge. Teresa and Airan still attend Wembley.

The old house was log with a frame kitchen and kid's room built on. We had a well which still supplies the water for the livestock and house. The barns are log as is the garage. We built a new house in 1971.

Art and I were both active in the FUA and FWUA when it was active in the area and we enjoyed many gatherings and card parties in area homes and dances in the old Huallen hall before it collapsed under the snow. The children have been in the Wembley 4-H Beef Club and Art has been leader of the club for the last five years. I have been leader and assistant of the Wembley 4-H Multi Club since it was formed three years ago.

Mrs. Rossiter (my mother) has lived with us since my father passed away in 1970. Art's father always enjoyed a visit with us and always said he'd like to live up here. He passed away September 1977.

I started work again, after 16 years, in 1977. I'm working at Beaverlodge hospital. Art took a job last fall running cat for Kelmans, putting in oil sites south of Grande Prairie. Robert is employed by the same company.

The Breitkreutz Family

by Edward Breitkreutz

My father, Ernest, came to Massachusetts, U.S.A., from Russia in 1908 and after three years came to Stony Plain, Alberta.

My mother Olga (Duckolki) was born and grew up at Stony Plain. They were married November 12, 1911, moving to Medicine Hat for three years. Then they moved to Golden Spike to farm, but not being able to expand in farming as all the extra land had been bought up, they decided to move to the Wembley, Huallen area, arriving on April 27, 1927. They also wanted to start up a new Church Mission in this area.

There were eight boys, Ernest Jr., Herman, John, Edward, Carl, Walter, George, Erwin, and five girls; Bertha, Ester, Julia, Martha and Clara.

We came to Wembley by train, bringing all our belongings plus one horse and a few sheep. My dad had come up in the late fall of 1926, and bought SE 7-71-8-W6 and constructed a shack during the winter, resembling today's field granary, only it had a ceiling, (or an upstairs), which you climbed to on a ladder, nailed to the wall.

The shack sat in the middle of a 25 acre fall ploughed field. In the spring break-up, you can imagine what our feet looked like with that blue gumbo sticking to our feet. Feet that we thought weighed a ton! Mr. John Wagar was punching a well, and as he was unable to strike water for us, Dad was a little discouraged. He bought and moved to NE 18-71-8-W6 after a month or so. The previous owner, Mr. Mat Graham, had a big frame house, consisting of three rooms down stairs, with a porch, and two rooms upstairs, with a balcony.

Being only seven years old at the time, here I grew up, taking my grade one in Wembley, with Miss Margaret MacNaught as my teacher. My other grades I took at St. John's Parochial School, with Mr. Marvin Mundt and my last year, I had Reverend Egon G. Wildgrube as my teacher. Wembley school bus was a covered wagon in the summer and a covered sled in the winter. The school bus was driven by Mr. Johns, and then towards spring drivers changed to Mr. Paul and a more modern wagon having cushioned seats was obtained.

Billy Bruce and George Gorden lived to the south, seemed there were plenty of bachelors lived in this area. Frank Boyd and Alex Muir to the north, Ernie Wilson and George Ferguson to the west.

Sundays were spent by going to church, this church being founded in 1927. The first service that I can remember attending was in the home of Valentine Mayer Sr. just south of Huallen, on the Jake Heikel Sr. property. Then services were conducted in the Lower Beaverlodge School until the Church-School was constructed in 1928. Some Sundays were spent just visiting with friends or relatives in the afternoons or evenings.

Picking up the farming career, horses were used, being my pride and joy, with a tractor taking over some of the duties years later. We never had a harrow cart, so walking behind the harrow was nearly always my job. Oh, I did my share of stooking and pitching of bundles at threshing time. We'd be gone from home six weeks, running from farmer to farmer, as my Dad owned a threshing machine.

The year 1936 was a bumper year for wheat and oats. My brother, Herman, and I spent that winter cleaning seed oats and hauling it to Wembley with four horses and a grain tank, loading it right into the box car, using a half-bushel scoop. Wheat was hauled to the elevator. It seemed that the livestock was always in need of straw. Then there was the firewood to be gotten. It had to be sawed with a buzz saw, which cost me one of my fingers. Then it had to be split, before spring break-up.

In the spring of 1937, my Dad bought our first car, a brand new Ford. In the spring of 1937 as well, I was one of the first men to take horses out to the Monkman Pass Road and donate two weeks of labour building bridges and corduroy. I also operated a slip, filling in the low spots.

We had young people's gatherings, Walther League, Summer Camp, with an occasional party at Christmas, Easter, Valentines and Halloween.

The first wedding that I can recall, was that of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Radtke, in 1928. The wedding meal was eaten at our house, and served by my mother. In those days people came to church and got married right after the service. So mother invited them over for dinner. My brother, Ernest, got married in 1938, after the morning service as well.

I served in the army from 1941 to 1945, four and one-half years. I took my training in Grande Prairie, and travelled from coast to coast. I never got shipped overseas, as I was in an accident in Vancouver that left me with a disability.

After my discharge in 1945, I helped farm, then later bought the NE 22-70-9-W6. I recall the winter of 1947 when Louis Heikel Sr. and I were logging partners up the Iroquois Creek and making lumber for our own use. We were living in a grain tank with a tarp over the top for a roof, and a little air-tight heater for a stove. One morning, we simply couldn't keep warm working, it was just too cold to stay any longer, so we decided to take off for home.

When we arrived at the top of the hill a mile north of the Beaverlodge river, we were invited in by a neighbor, William Deering, for coffee and to warm up. It was shortly after noon, and still a bone-chilling 64 degrees below zero. No wonder the horses didn't want to trot and we could barely speak to one another.



The Ed Breitkreutz Family, Colin, Brent, Olga, Ed, Darrell and Dwayne, 1977.

After batching for two and a half years, in June 1952, I married Olga Schultz. My farming operation has increased to five quarters. My mixed farming operation consists of growing clovers, grasses, grain and raising livestock. The family has grown to four sons, Dwayne, Darrell, Colin, and Brent. I enjoy farming so much I wouldn't think of doing anything else, as I have no trade, but like building with lumber. Someday I would like to do some travelling and recall old memories of yester year.

The Benoit Gaultier Family

Benoit was born in 1927, in Notre Dame de Lourdes, St. Malo, Manitoba, son of Henri Gaultier, who came from St. Malo, France to Canada in 1903. Henri is now 96 years old and still in good health. Ben's mother, Amelie Bosc came from St. Front, France with her parents in 1891. She died in 1966.

In 1949, Benoit, the youngest of a family of seven, married Liliane Durand, daughter of Pierre Durand and the late Rose-Delima Lagimodiere of Notre Dame de Lourdes, Manitoba. Liliane's grandparents Durand, from Haute-Loire, France, came to Canada in 1893 with three children. In this country they had twelve more children. In 1905 they moved in their new big brick house. Liliane's father bought that farm when he got married in 1927 and her brothers, sisters and herself were born and raised in that house. Their mother died in 1941 and their father remarried in 1957. Liliane is the second oldest of a family of eleven. She is the sixth generation of the first white women, Marie-Anne Gaboury, who came west and was married to Jean-Baptiste Lagimodiere. When she was nine years old, Liliane still remembers staying a week in St. Laurent, Manitoba at her grandparents, with her great-grandfather Lagimodiere who was one of Marie-Anne's grandchildren. In 1940 they all moved to The Pas, Manitoba.

Benoit and Liliane have seven children; three married daughters, one married son and two sons and a daughter living at home. Estelle and her husband live in Winnipeg, with their son. Simone and her husband live in Lloydminister. They have two sons and a daughter. Marie and her husband live in Edmonton, with their three sons. Aurele and his wife, Luella, live in Beaverlodge and they have one daughter. Laurent, Joanne and Fernard are still at home.



The Gaultier home on the farm in the Wembley district.

After farming twenty-two years on the Gaultier's homestead in Notre Dame de Lourdes, Ben and Liliane sold the farm and with their four youngest children took a trip west for two months with their motorhome. After those months of visiting several places, all the family wanted was to go back on a farm, so they came back where they saw the most beautiful country and it was in the Wembley and Grande Prairie area.

In June, 1973, they bought the Schmitke's farm, eight miles southwest of Huallen. For the first months they lived in the motorhome and the log house. In October, they moved into their new house. They have no regrets of having moved here because of the opportunities and advantages, such as: a greater choice in jobs, more wildlife and it is not as highly populated like in southern Manitoba. By moving here, they had the opportunity to experience what it is like to live in a society of many different nationalities. It was a great change compared to the all-French town they had come from.

The Alfred Golnick Family

Alfred was born on December 17, 1953. He was the fourth child and second son of Fred and Elsa Golnick of Wembley, Alberta.

He was raised on his father's farm. When he was old enough he and his brothers and sisters helped out on the farm with the chores. Alfred was educated at Wembley School and completed his high school at the Grande Prairie Composite High School.

In July, 1972 he met the girl of his dreams, Gloria Love of Teepee Creek. He courted her for a year until August 17, 1973 when they tied the knot.

The first year and a half Alfred and Gloria lived in Vernon, B.C., but Alf was very discontented there. Farming was in his blood, so in March, 1975, Alfred and his wife left Vernon and came back to the Peace River Country where they took up residence on his father's farm. Alf wanted to help his father out on the farm as the latter was getting up in age and the work on the farm was getting to be too much for him.

On May 26, 1976 the stork arrived on Alf and Gloria's doorstep bringing them a daughter, Crystal, to make their life more full. Two years later the stork returned on May 3, 1978, with a son, Clinton, to be a playmate for Crystal and eventually be a helping hand for his dad.

The Fred Golnick Family

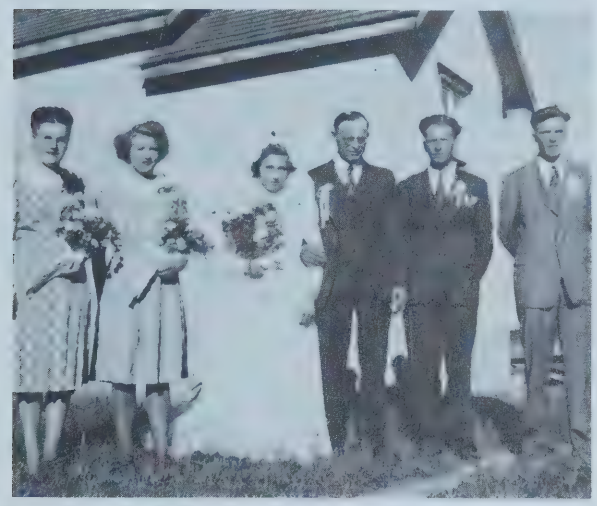
Fred Golnick was born September 23, 1908 in Warsaw, Poland. After receiving letters and newspaper clippings from his brother in the United States about how cheap land was in Canada, Fred decided to come over along with Ed Grams and the Kopp family to see for himself.

On May 1, 1928 he started his journey by ship across the ocean to Canada. He landed in Halifax on May 18, 1928. From Halifax he travelled by rail across the country. He found the landscape in Quebec and Ontario to be too much like his homeland so he decided to go further west to see if the land was less rocky. He travelled to Winnipeg then to Saskatoon where he stopped and worked on a farm for a month. After a month at Saskatoon, Fred decided to continue his travels further west. He caught a train to Edmonton and found a job working on a farm in Stony Plain, and worked there for eleven months. After reading articles in the Edmonton Journal about how beautiful the Peace River Country was, Fred, once again had to see for himself, so he was on the next train to Wembley. At that time, Wembley was as far as the rail went.

In May of 1929 Fred bought a homestead quarter for $10.00, and in the fall of 1929 and early 1930 he built his first log house. He then proceeded to clear his land. He did this all by axe and used a horse drawn plow to cultivate the land. He had eighty acres under cultivation by 1935. His neighbours at that time were Roland Young, the Penney Brothers, Walter Reinitz and Ed Grams.

Fred said, "The house was too big for one person so I got married." In 1935 he met and married Sara Goertzen and the house wasn't empty very long for on July 3, 1936 their first child, Laura, was born. One year later a son, Melvin, was born on August 10, 1937. Another three years passed and a second son, Daniel, was born on

February 26, 1940. In 1942, Sara left Fred and the children. In order to support the children Fred found it necessary to leave the children with neighbours and go out working in Dawson Creek and Whitehorse for the U.S. Army for three years. In 1945 he returned to his homestead, brought his children back home with him and took up farming once again. He worked the land with horses until 1949 when he bought his first tractor.



Fred and Elsa Golnick Wedding. Herta Schultz, Emma Brieze, Fred Kopp and Adolf Schultz.



Ed, Laura, Alfred, Dan, Ted, Edith, Irene, Martha, Margaret, Elizabeth. Missing are Melvin and Fred.

Once again in 1949 cupid played his role on Fred. He fell in love with Elsa Briese who had arrived that same year from Berlin, Germany. She came over on ship on February 18, 1949 and came straight through to Wembley where she had relatives already living. On September 10, 1949 Elsa became the bride of Fred and on July 18, 1950 their daughter, Elizabeth, was born. One year later on October 19, 1951, a son, Theodore, was born. The two little ones kept Elsa busy. Once again the stork came to the Golnick family bringing another sister for the other two, Margaret on January 4, 1953. On December 17, 1953 the stork brought still another bundle to Elsa. Their second son, Alfred, was born on March 17, 1955. That same day one year later, Edwin was born. On November 5, 1958 still another daughter Irene was born, and again on March 27, 1960 the last daughter, Edith was born. The children kept them very busy so they had very little time for entertainment.

Fred's family grew and so, as the years went by the children married and to date Fred has 17 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

The Annie Grams Family

During the warm month of April, 1929, the Estonia completed it's routine passage and docked in Halifax harbour. It mainly transported immigrants to the land of opportunity. Amongst the hopefuls was a Russian family of six, including a daughter called Annie.

The Enns's had come from Friedensfeld, USSR, hoping to reach the Clairmont area where an uncle would help them settle. It was not until September 28, after five months of quarantine, that they boarded the train to Alberta. All marveled at the countryside seen through the train window. What promise these open spaces held.

The Enns family settled on their homestead by Lake Saskatoon. With the harsh winter coming and little money to live on, it was decided that the oldest daughter, Annie, who was then fifteen, was to help by working out doing housework. Annie was fortunate enough to work for Mr. and Mrs. Densky and Emma Schneider. At Emma's, she met Ludymand Schmitke, a bachelor who had come from Hubbin, Poland, in July of 1929. He would drop in on his way to his homestead in the Aspen Dale district.

On March 24, 1933 Annie and Ludymand were married by Pastor Wildgrube in the old Wembley Lutheran Church. Their first son John, who died as a baby, was delivered by Dr. Carlisle, in the Grande Prairie Hospital. They had three more children; Henry, Mary and Carl. On January of 1939, tragedy struck again in the sod roof log cabin. Ludymand died of illness at the age of thirty-five. Annie was fortunate to have many good neighbors, such as Arthur and Liska Lange and Gottfried and Lydia Stefan, who helped her through those difficult times.



The Grams Family, Erna, Carl Schmitke, Rose, Henry Schmitke. Front row: Ralph Dworsky, Julia, Norman, Edward Jr. Anna and Edward Grams.

She met Edward Grams who homesteaded west of Walter Reinitz. Edward, who came from Warsaw, Poland, had landed in Canada in May of 1928. By helping farmers with harvesting, doing chores and hauling fire wood, he had worked his way across the Prairies. He came to the Aspen Dale district in 1929. Like so many other ambitious young men, he came ready to endure hard, unending days of brushing with a broad axe and pulling tree stumps with a horse. He wanted to farm the land of his dreams. When Edward and Annie were married, Edward sold his land to Walter Reinitz and bought land adjoining Annie's quarter. Annie recalls the quiet spent by the oil lamps sewing and knitting for the children. Edward was well known for his love of hunting and fishing. With the game and the food from the farm they lived quite contentedly. Again tragedy struck. Mary died in a home accident. In spite of this, Annie still cherishes the good times this closely meshed German community provided with a helping hand whenever needed, as well as several good house parties. In this atmosphere they raised their eight children. Edward died at the age of 72 survived by his family all which remained in the area.



Ferdynand Schmitke, war times, Poland.

Henry Schmitke is living in Grande Prairie, as is Carl Schmitke who married Effie Riggan. Evelyn Grams married Bruno Kaut and they raised their family on a farm near Wembley. Bruno died in 1979. Rose and Erna married John and Ken Nelson (respectively) and are living in Grande Prairie. Edward, Jr. married Eveline Mercier of Donnelly and they are farming in Huallen next to the old home quarter. Julia married Ronald Moonen and they farm in the Beaverlodge area.

Annie Grams has retired in Grande Prairie and is living with her son, Norman. As many others who struggled to develop this country, she has never lost her warm spirit. She always looks forward to a lively time in the company of family, neighbors and friends.

The Arthur John Kitson Family

After losing her youngest son, Charles, and husband, Charles Frederick Penny from diptheria in 1915, Ellen Kitson married Arthur John Kitson in 1918. In 1919, Arthur and Ellen Kitson, and their two sons came to Canada to settle at Spirit River. While at Spirit River, John Kitson was born, April 1, 1921. Later they moved to the first homestead now owned by Gordon Schoepp, and also homesteaded on the land now farmed by Edward Brietkreutz.

They also lived at South Wapiti in 1932, on land now farmed by the Lofstroms. John went to school there for approximately four years. Bob McCullough worked for John's dad during this time. They broke in two steers for oxen which helped to break land and haul feed across the Wapiti for winter.

John left the Wapiti and went to work for Bill Palmer in the spring of 1936. He stayed there for a year and a half delivering milk in Wembley. Then Mr. Palmer sold the business to Finley Watson. John stayed on until the fall of 1938, when he went home and took the crop off for his dad. That was when he got the nickname "Red".

In the fall of 1938 they went to Edmonton, where John worked on a dairy farm for the winter. In the spring of 1939 they went back to Wembley and worked on their car with Alex Hutchinson to be ready to move to Vancouver, B.C.

John drove truck in Vancouver until he joined the Seaforth Highlanders on May 10, 1940. On May 14 he was sent to Calgary for training. He met Viola Gray on May 24 and they were married August 7, 1940. Then John was transferred to the 14th Calgary Tank Regiment in March 1941, and a couple of days later he left Calgary for Camp Bordon. He left Camp Bordon around the middle of June 1941 for overseas. When heavy support Squadron was disbanded he was transferred back to 14th Calgary Tank Regiment. He returned to Canada in 1945 and settled in Kamloops, B.C. John and Viola have five children; Ellen, Rodney, Melvin, Florence and William, and fourteen grandchildren. Since the army he had worked for the C.N.R. Co. until his retirement. They are still residing at Kamloops, B.C.

The Arthur Lange Family

by Emma Lange

Arthur Lange and his son, Hans, came to Canada as German immigrants in 1924. They boarded the ship, Bremen, at the Bremen harbour and were among the first Germans to come into Canada after the World War 1. They landed in Halifax and from there were put on the train for Regina, Saskatchewan. They came in as farm labourers, as that was the only way they could get to Canada. Arthur and Hans were sent to a farm at Holdfast, Saskatchewan. What a surprise when the farmer told them to get the horses ready for working in the field. They had to learn to handle as many as six and eight horses to plow fields.

After a year in Saskatchewan, they moved on to Vulcan, Alberta. Arthur had met a Mr. Mutz on the ship and he asked him to come to Vulcan as he could help them get work. Arthur worked on the farm and Hans in a hotel, which was owned by Mr. Mutz. Mrs. Lange, Liska, came to Canada too, after they got settled there. She also worked in the hotel, doing laundry for the hotel and private customers.

Arthur and Hans, who was 18 years old at the time, came to Canada with the intention of someday owning their own land. So, in 1926, Arthur started to make inquiries about getting farm land and was told a new territory was being settled in the Peace Country. In the fall of 1926, he set out for Wembley. That was the end of the railroad then. When he arrived he was informed he could get a horse from Mr. Finch. He set out on horseback, which was quite an ordeal for a man that hadn't ridden before, going as far as Pouce Coupe. Finally, he decided to concentrate on getting land in the Wembley area.

Arthur went back to Vulcan for the winter and in the spring of 1927, bought horses and machinery, loaded two cars and sent them on to Wembley. He and Hans started out in a Model T. Ford.

At that time, the only road was to McLennan, Peace River, Spirit River and then on to Grande Prairie and Wembley. They got as far as Edmonton on the first of July and what a surprise when they found all stores, eating places and gas stations closed. Then they started out on their big adventure. They were told more than once that they would never make it. It took six days until they arrived in Wembley, just in time to unload their equipment.

They bought half a section from the soldier settlement in the Aspen Ridge district, which was later called Aspen Dale. Arthur considered himself very lucky as there was a house on the land, and it had a shingled roof. Most buildings had sod roofs. Liska came up in 1928, as she had stayed in Vulcan for another year. Then it meant roll up your sleeves, take an axe in hand and get busy. They had very good neighbours, Frank Willsey, and Roland Young, who were always willing to give advice and lend a hand. You can imagine Mr. Lange's pride when he took that first load of wheat to the elevator, a dream that he often wondered would come true. There were two homesteads adjoining the land he bought. He took out homestead rights for one, and Hans the other.

In 1930, Hans met Emma Hennig who was a nurse, working in the Grande Prairie Hospital. In 1933 they got married and moved onto the homestead. Things were rough going on the farm, but there was work to be had in Grande Prairie, so Hans got work from Mr. Frank Donald and Emma went to work at the hospital. They sold the farm and moved to Grande Prairie, where they still reside.

Hans and Emma have five children. One died in infancy. The rest are married and have families. Hildegard married Robert Campsall. They have three children. Lois married Lionel Kyle, they have three girls. They live in Grande Prairie. Arthur lives in Calgary. He married Valerie Macleod, they have two boys and a girl. Hilmar went to Australia, married an Australian girl and they are proud parents of one girl.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lange sold their farm to Frank Nagel and moved to Grande Prairie in 1965. In 1968 Mrs. Lange had misfortune to fall and break her leg which was followed by a stroke. She died in 1971. Mr. Lange then moved to the Pioneer Lodge where he died in 1974.

The Val Mayer Family

by Val Mayer Jr.

As near as I can remember or put together, I was told that my parents moved to Wembley district in January or February of 1927. They first rented a farm just about three miles east of St. John's Lutheran Church, and lived there approximately two years before they decided to build on the SW 26-70-9-W6.

They farmed there, in a small way. Water was very hard to come by. I remember myself, shortly after the war, having to haul water for cattle as much as three or four miles.



Elanor and Val Mayer, 1935.

We lived on the homestead until mother passed away in March of 1953. She had a bout of leukemia, which is not a simple disease, but actually, a form of cancer. They took her to Edmonton and whatever they could do for her, they did. She recovered from the first bout with surgery. However, it was a very short recovery. Apparently, some complications arose. I remember she was quite cheerful throughout the summer, but when fall set in, October, she started to slip back. As time progressed, she spent sometime in the local hospital in Grande Prairie. The surgeons in Edmonton had refused to attempt to perform another operation. It was a growth developing in her internal organs which seemed to devour all her red blood cells. I can remember at Christmas of 1952, there was more company and visitors came to the house than I thought there were people available. I guess one of the reasons, which I did not know and did not have the age to grasp at the time, was that Mother was very popular for the unusual things she had done during her adult life.

I was told just recently, by some friends, that when I was approximately three years old, they discovered there was something not quite right with my nervous system.

Now apparently, Dad must have contacted the adoption agency where they had received me from in 1935. From what I understand, the adoption agency told Dad, "Well, if he is not healthy, bring him back". But mother, being the person that she was, said, "Absolutely no, you cannot have him. He is mine to stay".

I should go back, as near as I can recollect, to 1928 and 1929, when Dad had a contract with the NAR Railroad. At that time they were continuing the spur line from Grande Prairie west to Dawson Creek. (This is no longer considered a spur line but part of the main line.) I remember Dad mentioning that it was quite often hard to obtain men to work on this job that he had building railway grade, but somehow or another they put it all together.



Mrs. Mayer, Mrs. Bull, 1929.

Our farm life would not be much different from anyone else in the area. Everything went along fairly smoothly up until 1945. We were in a similar situation with the entire neighborhood. There was no money to start or to venture into anything better; just enough to continue along the same old line. My sister, who was actually my parent's niece, started her adult life along the same lines that she had already been living. She married in 1940, and they moved up into the Halcourt district for approximately 12 years, if my memory is correct. From there they moved on to the Okanagan Valley, in the B.C. interior. There they began fruit farming.

However, to get back to the Peace River area, farming is by no means a simple endeavor. Even today, we are faced with astronomical costs of machinery and various other things which make the business difficult to establish. Going back to the depression years, if a person thinks at all, we just do not realize how blessed we are. The biggest problem that I can really remember specifically, was Dad's health. He was not that healthy a person and eventually he passed away in 1964 of emphysema.

I felt in a way, as we all do as youths, that those were some of the best years of my life, spent there on the farm. Life has carried me through a few places since then. For some reason that I do not fully understand, I always feel that God is on my side. He smooths out the rough spots and makes it somewhat simpler to continue where a person may give up and become discouraged quite easily.

I believe today that the farm is a very good place to raise a family, compared to the city. I have spent most of my adult life in and around the city so I have a fair view on both. At present I am trying to work with disabled children and see that they get the opportunity to make something of themselves, whatever way becomes possible.

The Frank Nagel Family

I was born April 1, 1895 in Hungary. I fought in World War I. In May 1927, I came over to Canada from Austria. My first stop was Edmonton. For one year I worked in Strathcona on a farm, moving from there to Peace River. I worked on a farm at Brownvale.

In 1929 I came to the Huallen district and took up a homestead. While here I worked on the railroad from Wembley to Dawson Creek, when it was being built. In 1931 I started farming my homestead. The following year, 1932, I married Amanda Stierle. We were blessed with three children.

In 1934, on April 28, our first daughter Alma, was born. Our only son, Englebert, was born on February 18, 1936. In 1946 on January 5, our youngest daughter, Dorothy, was born. They took their schooling at Aspendale. Dorothy finished her's at Wembley.



The Frank Nagel Family. Dorothy, Alma, Amanda, Engelbert, Frank seated.

Alma is married to Alvin Senner. They live at Fraser Lake, B.C. Alvin is employed at a sawmill there. They have five children; Linda, Gary, Karen, Wayne, and Brenda.

Englebert married Laura Howatt. They farmed at Huallen until 1973, then they moved to Wembley. Englebert is employed at the Wembley Seed Cleaning Plant. They have three children; Kelvin, Vance, and Shelly.

Dorothy married Bob Sieker. They live in Grande Prairie. Bob runs the U.F.A. Co-Op Bulk Plant in Grande Prairie and the one in Wembley. They have three children; Beverly, Rodney, and Clinton.

In 1966, I retired from farming and my wife and I moved to Grande Prairie, where we now live.

The Ronald Penney Family

My mother, brother Cecil, myself and my stepfather, Arthur Kitson, who served with the Canadian Armed Forces from 1914 to 1918, left England the summer of 1919. After spending a few weeks in Winnipeg and Edmonton, it was on to Spirit River, where my stepfather took a soldier's grant, having originally homesteaded some years before the war near North Battleford.

I was 14 years old that winter of 1919-20, which was the longest, hardest winter, with the most snow I have ever experienced in the Peace. Even so, we got logs and built a house and barn that winter.

Our brother, John Kitson, was born in April of 1921. There were hard times in the early twenties and a lot of the war veterans left the land as we did in the summer of 1923. We came back to the Peace, in the spring of 1926, landing at Wembley.

We homesteaded south of Wembley, in what was known as the Dry Ridge. We met Ro Young who showed us land that could be taken up. Ro had been living on the Ridge since 1919. He spoke about getting a school built as that was the only way we could get roads built. The only roads there were logging trails. I asked how many school age children there were, Ro said that we would have to stretch that a bit. However, by 1927 quite a few of emigrants from Central Europe moved into the country. When our school opened in September, 1928, there wre approximately 20 children ready for school.

By the mid-thirties the school was becoming overcrowded, so it was decided to divide the district. Aspen Ridge School was moved two miles west and was renamed Aspen Dale. A new school was built in the east of the district and kept the name of Aspen Ridge.

In 1935 the Aspen Dale community built about 20 miles of telephone line. This was quite an undertaking as there was little or no money available in the hungry thirties. Each homesteader got his allotted poles and second hand wire, insulators, brackets, & phone box. The cost to each of us came to a little over $11. The line terminated at Huallen in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thorsen, where AGT put in the central or switch board. I must mention that we had excellent service from the Thorsens, at all hours, if we needed it. I am sure it was the best investment our district ever made.

In 1934 I married Jean MacNeill. We had three children,; Margaret, Isabel and Douglas. They all received their grade school education at Aspen Dale, leaving home to take High School and then on to College and University. Jean and I have nine grandchildren.

In 1973, we sold our farm to the Reichert brothers, and retired. We have now made our home in Grande Prairie.

The John Reichert Family

Like many others, the Arnold Reicherts immigrated to Canada from Europe in 1929. Arnold and Alvina, with their rapidly growing family moved to various parts of Alberta and Saskatchewan seeking a means to support their family.

Being informed by a grossly exaggerating fellow as to the wealth in Tupper Creek, they moved into that area towards winter. Their first home was a three walled, roofless, would-be barn.

After two years of non-rewarding hard labor on the homestead, Arnold walked to Grande Prairie and worked for various farmers there. He was grateful to the many people who offered their hospitality to him, one of them being the Sherk family who, although they had already hired their thrashing crew, hired him for one day.

Eckstein, who had a car, generously moved the Reicherts to Sexsmith, where they farmed for several years and added more children to their family.

Purchasing a homestead quarter for $15 in Valleyview, they were on the move once again, this time with borrowed horses and a wagon. On arrival in Valleyview, one of the horses died.

Being the second youngest in a family of seven girls and three boys, I, John, vaguely recall seeing, yet not comprehending the toil of clearing the land by hand. The only thing I can remember of the hard times is the rationing stamps, which we children used for play money.

Having worked on oil rigs for several years in the Arctic, Alaska, Yukon, California and Alberta, at the age of 29, I realized that the single life was not for me. In November of 1971 I took Valerie Mayer, the third daughter of Val and Irma Mayer, for my wife.

After living in Beaverlodge for several years, the Lord blessed us with Ruth, our first born, and also enabled us to buy the Ronald Penny farm. After moving out to the farm, our family was further enriched by the addition of Karen, Jennifer, and Steven.

The George Schadeck Family

In the year 1887, in the month of December, Michael Schadeck and his wife, Caroline, left Russia to make their home in America. While on the ship, their first son was born. They named him George and he had three brothers later.



George Schadeck's Wedding 1907.

After a brief sojourn in Portland, Oregon, they moved to Stony Plain, Alberta.

Meanwhile, in Russia, in the year 1890, a little girl was born to Ferdinand and Augusta Riske. They named her Lydia. She was the oldest of six girls and two boys. They also immigrated to the States, later moving to Strathcona, a suburb of Edmonton. There George and Lydia met and were married on November 17, 1907.

They made their first home in Stony Plain. Their union was blessed with five children, four of whom are still living. The children all attended school in Garden Valley.

In April of 1928, the Schadeck family moved to Wembley, this being the end of steel then. Here they rented a farm from Henry Enders, for two years, until they got their own homestead proved up and a house built.

In the year 1930, they moved onto their own land. They lived on NW 27-70-9 and had the adjoining quarter which made a nice farm. It was also in 1930 that they lost their oldest daughter Elsa.

The younger children attended lower Beaverlodge School for a year or two.

Life was hard in the 30's. Clearing land and trying to make a living was an endless chore, but they had many good neighbors, and the winter evenings were spent playing cards, dancing, etc.

Not every farm had a well, so ice had to be put up in the winter to furnish their summer water supply.

George, being quite a hunter, used to guide hunters to the mountains for sheep and goats. This also provided many a tasty roast for their own table. All the boys inherited their father's love of hunting and still do it today.

During World War II, Eddie served overseas for five years. Otto was stationed in Canada.

The children are all grown up and married. Fred married Edna Baumberger. They have three children, and live in Edmonton. Emma married Charles Clease. He's a painter, and they live in Dawson Creek, B.C. Otto married Leona Zeling. They have five children and are retired and live in Grande Prairie. Eddie married Margaret Stevens, and they live at Salmon Arm, B.C.

George passed away in 1958, and Lydia still lives in her little house in Wembley.

Otto Schadeck Family

by Leona Schadeck

Otto and I were married in the fall of 1945 after he had his discharge papers from the army.



Otto Schadeck Family, Evelyn, Shirley, Esther, Ruth, David, seated Otto, and Leona, 1963.



Otto and Leona Schadeck Wedding 1945.

We set up housekeeping on my dad's half section in the Aspen Dale district. Dad had gone to B.C., mother stayed with us.

After Otto got his V.L.A. grant, we purchased another quarter of that section from Hans Lange. A year later, we bought Jack Penny's quarter which completed section 16-70-9-W6.

It was hard those first years, the machinery dad left was nearly all worn out. We only had horses to work with, added to this was the tiresome job of hauling water. We got a well drilled the second year but the water was very hard.

We paid shares to my sisters and brother also gave mom a third of the crop.

After 16 years and five children (four daughters and a son), we decided we had enough of sandy land and hard water. We sold this section and bought George Stoll's farm south of Wembley. Here we had a lovely big house, a big barn and best of all, lots of soft water.

The children really enjoyed this place, as we were only four miles from town and school. They could participate in volleyball, basketball and 4-H. They collected many prizes both in beef and dairy clubs. Ruth, our eldest daughter, was instrumental in starting a horse club.

Life was certainly a lot more pleasant, but the children grew up as children will. In July of 1969, Shirley married Ken Sask. He works for C.N.R. and they live in Spruce Grove. The next year, Esther married Joe Kish, they live in Grande Prairie. He's a millwright at the planer. She works for the post office.

Evelyn married Charlie Cramer. He's an electrician at Proctor and Gamble. They live on a farm at Wembley.

Ruth is married to John Wagner, they have a small ranch at Duffield, Alberta. She still loves horses and has a saddle pony.

David is married to Maureen Mayer. She's employed at the college. He's a mechanic for Fleet Maintenance.

So we are back where we started on our own again. We sold the Stoll farm in 1972 and moved to Grande Prairie. Otto still works at construction jobs, and I babysit and do janitor work.

Life has been good to us, we have enjoyed fairly good health. When you have that, the hard work doesn't seem so bad.

The Schultz Family

by Olga (Schultz) Breitkreutz

My parents, Emil and Wilhelmina Schultz, immigrated from Poland, but are of the German origin. They had heard so much about Canada, that it was such a good and free land, so they decided to venture out and start a new life.

Arriving with one son, William, and one daughter, Bertha, they came to Wembley by rail on September 3, 1929. Hythe was the end of the railway at the time.

My dad was a farmer. Here he got a job working for different farmers, and living in different yards, until he bought SE 28-70-9-W6 from the Soldier Settlement Board in the spring of 1930.

He came to this country with only $250 in his pocket. Out of this, he was able to buy a horse and a cow. Mother, staying at home and taking care of things, had to haul water from Bowman Lake with a stoneboat and barrel. Many a time she'd get half-way home and the horse would shy or balk, dumping out all the water and she would have to go back to the lake for a refill. Being open range made it difficult at times looking for the stock.

Later Adolph, Herta and myself, Olga, and then Eduard were added to the family.



Emil Schultz Family, 1939. Emil, wife, Bill, Bertha, Adolf, Ed, Olga, Herta.

My first home, the house that I also was born in and lived in for the first year of my life, was a one-room log house. It had a wooden roof, not a sod roof like many of the other buildings had. By the time I was a year old, my folks had built a new house. The structure of the house was squared logs standing up and down, which were cut by my parents, Dad being up on top of the sawing frame and Mother standing below pulling the saw up and down. It was a special rip saw that you had to use, with handles on both ends. This home was quite a bit larger than the homestead shack. It had two rooms downstairs and an upstairs. To get into the upstairs there was a ladder nailed on the wall which you had to climb.

They cleared their first land with a brush axe and hired a neighbour to break it for them. Seeding was no problem; it was done quite easily by hand. They had to hire another neighbour with a binder to cut the crop. Threshing was done with a flail.

We had neighbours all around us. Those days there was someone on every quarter. Frank Willsey to the north, Arthur Lange to the west, Philip Hennig to the south, and to the east, across the road from us, were Clarence Grubbs!

Whenever Mother had to go to the hospital, my sister Herta and I had to go and stay at the George Schadeck house, a mile to the north of us. I still have fond memories of staying at their house.

Back in the 30's when we needed a doctor, we went to Wembley. Dr. Carlisle was our doctor as well as the dentist. He had an office there, but the hospital was at Grande Prairie.

We'd go to Church on Sundays six miles north, to St. John's, with Rev. Egon G. Wildgrube as pastor.

In 1938 the school, which was called Aspen Ridge at the time, was moved two miles to the west. The new school site was then called Aspen Dale.

Church services and Sunday School were held in the school by Rev. Walter Schienbine, then in 1942 a Church was built on NE 22-70-9-W6 to accommodate all the people living in the south. Rev. John Ohlinger was the pastor in charge at that time.

I took all my schooling at Aspen Dale, grades one to nine being taught. Those days money was scarce and hard to come by. When I was in grade one, they would ask you what your ambitions were when you got older and I said a farmer's wife. All of my classmates achieved their ambitions as well.

I had only a half mile to walk to school, but when it would blizzard or be cold, that was too far. Mr. Hilles Stratten was teaching in 1940, when we got a chinook that took all the snow away and left only a big sheet of ice on the front of the school. Mr. Stratten took his model B, tied a bench behind, taking older students like Georgia Kaufman, Bert Grubb, Jean Paverly with some of us younger pupils in the bench and we would play crack the whip.

Another one of our teachers was Mrs. Winona Young. It seemed that every spring the bridge into the school yard would wash out. The county brought the planks for the bridge and dropped them off at the north end of the school yard on the road. Mrs. Young got impatient one day and brought ropes to school, had us school children drag the planks down to where the bridge should be and we built it ourselves.

The first wedding that I can recollect was that of George Gitzel and Martha Hennig.

During Christmas season it was always a great pleasure to be able to take in all the programs. We'd go from one school or church to another, generally five nights in a row, with a team of horses and a big bob sled or cutter. We'd put lots of straw in the bottom of the box, heat field rocks in the oven putting them in the sled also so we could put our feet on to keep them warm. Bundling up in blankets, away we'd go.

In 1952, I married Eduard Breitkreutz, he being a returned soldier and farmer at heart. We live on NE 22-70-9-W6. We carry on a mixed farming operation. By 1961 the family had outgrown the house, so we built a new modern home.

Our marriage was blessed with four sons, Dwayne, Darrell, Colin, all employed and on their own, and Brent who is still going to school.

On June 8, 1977, our children had a suprise Silver Anniversary party in our honour.

I have no plans for the future, other than being a farmer's wife and helpmate.

The Edmund Stierle Family

The Stierle family first decided to emigrate to Canada when friends (the Otto Kopp family) wrote to them in Poland and told them about the Peace River Country, the vast area and homesteading opportunities. It sounded inviting, and so the family of Emil Stierle, with the exception of two members, decided they would come to Canada. The family members that came to Canada were Edmund and his wife Frieda, who had been married on January 6, 1929, Olga (Tom), Amanda (Nagel), Lydia (Schultz) and the youngest son, Albert. The only married one was Edmund, the rest of the family married here in Canada. They left Poland to settle in this new land on May 25, 1929.

The family departed from Poland at the Port of Danzig. They travelled on a steamship, Estonia, and landed at the Canadian Port of Halifax on May 25, 1929. From there they travelled by train to Stony Plain, Alberta. They stayed there at the home of Jack Litzenberger for approximately two weeks. After this stop-over, they took the train to Wembley, Alberta (which was the end of the steel at that time). Mr. and Mrs. Otto Kopp met them and they stayed at their place for a short while.

They then went on to the Art and Liska Lange farm in the Huallen area and lived in a temporary dwelling for a short while until Emil Stierle's log home was built. Log houses at that time had their roof made from sod (Hudson's Bay shingles some people called them). All of the Stierle family, including Edmund and Frieda, lived there for a time.

Emil Stierle bought a quarter section of the Hudson's Bay land and filed on a quarter section of homestead land.



The Edmund Stierle Family, Eddie, Olga, Mary, Albert, Frieda, Natalie, Edmund.

Edmund and Frieda Stierle filed on a quarter section of homestead land each, making the half section. This land had to be cleared and brushed by hand and broke with horses and plows, which took a lot of hard work and a lot of time to make any progress.

In the meantime, Edmund got logs for his house on the homestead. Mr. Frank Willsey, a very able carpenter, built the house for them. Frieda worked at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Paverly for a time while Mrs. Paverly was ill.

In addition to working and trying to develop his land, Edmund also worked for various neighbours and farmers of the area, helping to clear land, etc.

St. John's Lutheran Church was their first place of worship and they were thankful to give praise and honor to God for His guidance, care, mercy and grace in this new land and home. They drove to church with horse and buggy in the summer and sleigh and horses in the winter. In the winter time they would have straw and hay in the sleigh and cover up with blankets and eiderdowns and heat rocks for warmth. Their first pastor was Rev. Egon Wildgrube, who also taught school in the St. John's School and taught Saturday school to the children. They were so grateful to have the opportunity to hear God's Word preached and taught. It was the greatest strength and hope in the new land.

Edmund and Frieda Stierle remained on the farm until 1968, when sons Albert and Edmund Jr. took over the operation and they moved into Grande Prairie; Edmund passed away April 23, 1970.

Members of the family of Edmund and Frieda Stierle are:

MARY, married to Russell Elford, Grande Prairie, having three children; Lorne, Leanne and Lance.

OLGA, married to Raymond Harris, Grande Prairie, having one daughter, Janet. A son, Allan, died at 15 months.

ROBERT, died at the early age of three, due to a ruptured appendix.

NATALIE, married to Roy Polack, Kelowna, B.C., having four children; Sandra, Steven, Wesley and Kelly. A daughter, Kathleen, died at two months.

ALBERT, married to Esther (nee Sieker), living in Grande Prairie, and having three children; Allison, Trenton and Rhonda.

EDMUND, living in Grande Prairie.

The Frank Willsey Family

Frank emigrated to Brock, Saskatchewan, from Wisconsin, United States. There he met and married Margaret More in October, 1913.

He moved from Brock to the Lake Saskatoon area in July, 1917 and was joined by wife Margaret, affectionately known as Maggie, and two young sons, Daniel and Melvin, in September.

The family lived in or close to Lake Saskatoon where Frank worked out for various farmers. Besides being a carpenter he also had steam engineer papers and ran the steam engine for the Bull Outfit for several years. He also had a half share in a Case Bull Tractor tricycle model, with H. Beeman of Wembley.

In 1920 the family lived about four miles west of Lake Saskatoon. It was from here that Dan started school. Mother Willsey often packed a lunch and taking her several small children herded their stock during the day, while Frank was away working.



Margaret and Harvey Hansen, Dorothy and Lloyd Willsey, Ellen and Walter Thompson,Marjorie and Orville Bue, Viola and Alfred Miller, Rose and Melvin Willsey, Frances and Roy Rose, Ann and Dan Willsey, Louise and Marvin Vatne, Jean and Frank Spence, Ivy and Jim Wilson.

In 1921, the family moved to the Aspen Dale district, leaving Dan boarding with Mrs. Fern Finch, to finish out his year of school at Lake Saskatoon. I remember Granny Finch telling us that Dan got a horse whipping with the buggy whip for using a few of Granny's "choice words". Her theory was "Do as I say - not as I do". She was a woman with a heart of gold.

With the help of some of the neighbors, Carl Leonard, Jim Castleman and others, Frank built a huge log house, about 24' by 38', of fire-killed spruce. Six and one-half rounds made an eight foot wall, the logs being rolled into place using ropes and horses. Soon the Willseys were clearing and planting and though they only had one quarter of land they always seemed to get along.

Frank and Maggie Willsey had 13 children and though times were often hard they never lacked for hospitality. Their table seated 15 people. On Sundays the young people gathered for miles around at Willseys and it was not uncommon for Mother Willsey to seat the table three times. Baseball, horse shoes and swimming in summer, skiing, skating, snow shoeing and of course dancing and card parties were the order of the day.

Frank Willsey spent a lot of time in Grande Prairie and around the district doing carpenter work. He was a fine carpenter and a lot of buildings still stand symbolic of his handiwork, among them the former Morley Sherk residence and Christ Church Anglican in Grande Prairie.

The three young boys, Dan, Melvin, and Raymond, drove five and a half miles to Lower Beaverlodge School in a covered van built by their father. In summer they rode horseback. Like so many of their generation they left school at an early age to get on with the business of farming. They rented any available quarter and helped at home. Melvin worked for years for Fred Dolphin until he enlisted and then Raymond worked for Fred until Fred retired, sold the land and moved to Wembley.



Willsey home.

Mrs. Willsey was a real pioneer. She could make a banquet out of the simplest things. Her chicken and biscuits and strawberry shortcake still cannot be equalled by her children. Her sewing was an art and there was always her ample bosom to comfort many. She was active in all community affairs including Women's Institute and the U.F.W.A. She even found time to attend a Women's Institute convention in Edmonton. The Church and school would have never been as well run had Mrs. Willsey not been on the board. Card parties, house parties, school dances were discussed over the kitchen table and everyone went and took all the little ones. Lunch was shared by all and a nominal fee was charged to help the local musicians buy strings for their instruments. How we loved it! The youngest children were bedded down on the stage amongst the coats and you were lucky to get home with your own child if some of the older boys became mischievous.

When World War II broke out three of the Willsey boys enlisted. Dan served in England and Germany in the Army of Occupation. He was with the Saskatchewan Light Infantry and the third Canadian Town Major in the Army of Occupation. Melvin served with the Cameron Highlanders. He was slightly wounded in Holland and after six weeks convalescence returned to the front lines. He and Dan returned home on the same troop ship. Jack spent most of his time in Eastern Canada but never got overseas.

Frank Willsey was working as a carpenter building for the United States Army at Fort St. John where he suffered a heart attack. He died on the farm in 1947. Mrs. Willsey sold the farm to Raymond and moved to Wembley where she lived for several years. She spent her later years in Pioneer Lodge until her death in 1971.



Frank and Margaret Willsey, taken on their 30th Wedding Anniversary, 1943.

The family are all alive and well. Dan married Anne Childs in 1939 and they had four children - Margaret, Jimmy, Jerry, and Marilyn. Dan was employed by Canadian Armed Forces D.N.D. as a civilian driver. Dan and Anne both retired in September, 1979 and now make their home at Chase, B.C. He is an avid curler, golfer, and bowler.

Melvin married Rose Hotte and has four children - David, Louella, Murray, and Sheena. They are farming the old Roland Young land and Melvin also works for Canfor. He, too is an ardent curler and snowmobiler.

Raymond is unmarried and is still farming the old home place. He also does carpenter work. The old log barn is gone but the old house still stands. Raymond renovated it inside and has a very cosy little home. He still skis and snowshoes.

Marjorie lost her husband, Orville Bue, in a tragic combine accident. She has four girls - Catherine, Viola, Evelyn, and Mavis. She lived in Matsqui, B.C. (where her daughter Evelyn and family live) for a few years and is now cooking for the County of Grande Prairie.

Frances married Roy Rose and they farm very successfully at Enilda, Alberta. They have three boys and a girl - Doug, Fred, Margaret, and David. Frances has curled in several major ladies bonspiels with great success.

Jack is a crane operator working out of Edmonton on construction. He has been married twice and has four children, two boys - Carson and Casey, and two girls - Deana and Judy. He spends a lot of time hunting and fishing.

Viola married Alfred Miller and lives in Grande Prairie. They have two daughters - Elaine and Bonnie. Alfred works for Canfor. Running true to form Viola is also an ardent curler.

Jean married Frank Spence and farmed at Hinton Trail for many years. They are now living in Stony Plain where Frank drives truck. They have five children - Edna, Phyllis, Melvin, June, and Margie.

Lloyd married Dorothy Pollock and farms at Enilda, Alberta. He also has a caterpillar which he operates. They have three children - Dale, Brenda, and Karen.

Louise married Marvin Vatne and lives in the Valhalla Centre District where they farm. They have four children - Lila, Marcine, Eric, and Lynn. Not to be outdone, Louise, too, excels at curling. There is quite a bit of friendly rivalry amongst the sisters and brothers, and it is not uncommon to see one or two Willseys on every sheet of ice at the local bonspiels.

Ivy married Jim Wilson and they have six children - Joy, Neil, Kevin, Kenny, Buddy, and Melanie. They farm on a large scale at Shell Lake, Saskatchewan.

Earl is a widower and presently lives in New Westminster. He runs a cat out from Vancouver doing landscaping. He has no family.

Ellen is married to Walter Thompson and they have three boys - Robert, Alex, and Barry. Walter is employed by B.C. Hydro and they are living at Agassiz, B.C.

It was a large family and the ties have been close. The Willseys have left their mark in the community for friendliness and good neighborliness.

Melvin and Rose Willsey and Family

Melvin was born in Brock, Saskatchewan in 1916, the second oldest son of thirteen children born to Frank and Margaret (More) Willsey. He was one year old when the family moved to the Lake Saskatoon district. They later moved to the Aspen Dale district, which Melvin has called home ever since.

Melvin went to school at the Lower Beaverlodge and Aspen Ridge schools, quitting at age fourteen to go to work. He worked for several area farmers, some of whom were Fred Dolphin, Henry Reese, Ken Edgerton and Nels Clow. In 1940 he worked a year surveying on the Alaska Highway from Fort Nelson to Fort Simpson for Lynch Colison.

In 1942, Melvin joined the army, where he served with the Calgary Highlanders. He went overseas in 1943 and saw action in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Melvin was in occupation for six months in Germany, returning home in 1946.

Rose was the sixth child born to Adelord and Clorida (St. Louie) Hotte, of their family of six girls and six boys. She was born in 1927, the same year the family moved to the Beaverlodge area from Dumas, Saskatchewan. She attended school in Beaverlodge through grade nine, then went to work as a waitress in a cafe in Beaverlodge owned by Fern Carson, where Rose was employed until she and Melvin were married.



Melvin and Rose Willsey's Wedding.

Melvin rented three quarters of land from Mr. R.S. Young for a year before meeting Rose. They met at the Beaverlodge Curling Rink in 1948; Melvin was curling there with Buster Hotte, Melvin Hart and Gordon Cameron. Melvin and Rose were married in 1949 in the Beaverlodge United Church. They moved to the farm, where they began their farming life with six horses and one cow; they also grew some grain. They purchased the land in 1959 and have since sold one quarter. They are still growing grains and raising cattle. Melvin also works at a full time job as Head Carpenter with Canfor-Lumber Division in Grande Prairie, where he has been since 1968.

Melvin was a member of the Aspen Dale School Board with Mike Roth and Ronald Penney, later became a member of the Wembley School Board. Rose was Assistant Leader one year for the Wembley 4-H Multi Club. Melvin's interests include curling and skidooing. Rose enjoys flower making, crocheting and doing handicrafts of all kinds in her spare time.

Melvin and Rose have four children. The oldest is David Alfred, born June 17, 1950. He attended school two years at Aspen Dale School, then Wembley through grade eleven, grade twelve was taken in Beaverlodge. He was a 4-H member of the Wembley Beef Club three years.



Melvin Willsey's Family, Son-in-law Ron, Luella, Sheena, Dave, wife Janice, Colleen, Murray. Seated Mel, Rose, and Dave's two children.

Upon completing school, Dave went to work at Canfor-Lumber Division and is now employed there as a Tallyman. He was married November 4, 1972 to Janice Lowe, daughter of Marj and Joe Lowe of Beaverlodge. Janice and Dave have two children, Shelly Diane, born November 24, 1976 and Sean David, born September 11, 1978. Their present home is in Grande Prairie. Dave enjoys softball, curling, skidooing and camping.

Next came Louella Marie on February 16, 1952. She went to school in Wembley through grade eleven, taking grade twelve in Beaverlodge. After finishing school, Louella worked as a cook at oil rigs and gravel crushers. On one of these jobs she met Ronald Kubbernus, son of Effie and Harold Kubbernus. Ron and Louella were married January 15, 1977 and live in Westlock. Louella enjoys curling, snowmobiling, camping, crocheting, sewing and doing various handicrafts.

Alvin Murray was a birthday present for his mother, born May 27, 1954. He attended the Wembley School through grade nine, then Beaverlodge High School for three years. After completing grade twelve, he worked for Ken Lock, next went to Proctor and Gamble, and finally to Prairie Truck and Trailer, apprenticing as a heavy duty mechanic. He lived at Clairmont and was married July 21, 1979, to Colleen Kerr, daughter of Walter and the late Constance Kerr of Beaverlodge. Interests included skidooing, hockey, curling, water skiing and motor biking. Murray and Colleen were tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident in October, 1980.

Last, but not least, came Sheena Rose on January 2, 1962. She went to school in Wembley through grade nine and attended high school in Beaverlodge. She hopes to become a commercial artist or an architect. Sheena is in her fifth year with the Wembley 4-H Beef Club and was also a member of the Wembley 4-H Multi Club for one year. Her interests include skidooing, curling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, swimming, camping, painting and doing handicrafts.

The Roland Young Family

by Winona Young

I first heard of the Peace River Country from my aunt, Mrs. Ralph Thompson. My uncle was a druggist in the Lake Saskatoon Village. During the flu epidemic in 1914, he died. My aunt and small cousin remained in the Peace River Country and moved with the Lake Saskatoon people to the Village of Wembley. They came home to Manitoba on visits.

Later Mr. Alex Love, of Boissevain and my father visited the Peace River Country, and each bought farm land. Mr. Love settled with his family in the Bezanson District. My father bought the land on the corner of which was the little hamlet of Valhalla Centre. Later two of my brothers, my mother and my father and I travelled by car to visit in Grande Prairie and see the new farm at Valhalla.

The outcome of this trip was that, later, I returned to the Peace River Country as a teacher for the Aspen Ridge School. The school was located near the villages of Huallen and Wembley, not far from my father's property. As we drove out to my boarding place, I received lasting impressions of many cabins and homes along the roadway. They had a cared-for look. Lines of washing, dazzling white and colored articles, flowers snuggled around the doorways and the neatly kept gardens told the passing travellers of the industrious home-loving people living there. This was true of the family with whom I was to live with for the next two years, 1930-31 and 1931-32, as teacher of the school.

The following year I taught in the Teepee Creek School, near Alex Love's farm. Then on July 5, 1933, in the growing town of Grande Prairie, I married my former school secretary, Mr. Roland Young. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Nelson Chappel, according to a promise I made when I first attended his church service. It was a promise that if I decided to marry someone in the Great Peace River Country, that he would be allowed to perform the ceremony.

After a trip by car and a camping trip to visit my folks in Manitoba, we returned to Aspen Ridge district, where we soon caught up on the news and work and sports. Many residents were from far away places but all worked for church, school, and various district organizations in their new home land.

Then came World War II. My husband, a veteran of World War I, was among those who felt he was needed "over there". He arranged with the competent young farmer who worked for us to stay on the farm with his wife and family, and carry on the work of the farm, until his return from the War.

Farm work continued satisfactorily for some months. As the war continued, and more and more men enlisted, we began to feel the strain. Men who were mechanics, painters, carpenters or competent in any way were in demand in the cities and towns to take the place of the workers who had enlisted. Some of them took an extra farm over, to allow others to help out in the cities or army. Some gave up their farms. When our farm manager told me of a farm with better accommodation for his growing family, I urged him to help out everybody concerned and accept the bigger job, that I with the smaller obligation would manage somehow. Even though I knew almost nothing of field or livestock husbandry, I would manage.

My nearest neighbour just north of me supervised the pig industry and helped get some registered rape seed for a small sandy field that grew neither grains, grass, or weeds. My neighbour just south of me came over and showed me how to adjust the plow. I wasn't plowing deep enough. My hired boy had harnessed the horses and

started me plowing while he went back to do heavier chores. We kept on farming and improving as the needs demanded.

The sandy barren field had produced better and better crops of green feed and promised a good seed crop some time. Meantime, the pigs were paying for the upkeep of our farm.

Then came peace and our men were coming home. It was harvest time and Ro helped the threshers to thresh our "once barren field". The returns were $800, clear, as if to especially welcome him home. Like many of them, he was so anxious to get back that he never bothered to get a formal inspection, and discharge. He wanted to farm, but soon found out that the experiences of World War II had left him with health problems. He was forced to give up the idea of farming. He had to sell his beloved farm and move to Grande Prairie to an office job that was less strenuous than farming.

The August Zeling Family

by Leona (Zeling) Schadeck

When our parents, August and Juleanna Zeling, left their native Germany in the summer of 1928, they had little premonition of the hard life ahead of them in this new land called Canada. Mother had a brother here who had come out the previous year. He sent back glowing tales of all the land available, also a few Sears and Roebuck catalogues to substantiate how stylish the people were.

Anyway, we arrived at Wembley on the third of July, 1928. Besides Dad and Mom, was my oldest sister, Adele, 16 years old, Hugo, 7 years, Frieda, 4½ years and myself, a mere 2½ years old.

We were met by Mr. Valentine Hennig, Sr. We had our first meal and our first night there. Next day we moved to Uncle Henry's place. We stayed with them while Dad searched for land. He decided on SE 16-70-9 for a homestead and bought the adjoining NE 16-70-9 from the Hudson Bay Co. Then the work of clearing and breaking land began. Dad purchased a small shack from Jake Heikel with a sod roof, and it was our first house. We built a barn in the same style.

Adele had already gotten a job working for some of the earlier settlers. She did everything from milking, cleaning barns, to scrubbing floors for $5 a month. How does that compare with the wages we get today? The next year she married Walter Reinitz, so she had her own place to look after.



Seated Mr. and Mrs. August Zeling, Herman Reinitz, Adella, Hugo, Leona, Ernie Reinitz, Kate and Anna Reinitz.

We walked to Aspen Ridge School, a distance of three miles. Frieda and I went fairly regular, Hugo when he could be spared.

This life was very hard and very lonely, as we had little social life and very few visitors. Mother often walked for miles through the bush in the moonlight just to talk to another woman for a few hours.

When the war came, Hugo enlisted and was sent overseas for four years.

Frieda and I did most of the field work as well as help with the milking.

Late in the fall of 1942, Frieda married Xafer Abt and moved to Grande Prairie.

The folks and I kept the farm going until the war ended. Dad decided to move to B.C., so he packed a box-car of stuff and left. He had deeded the land to me, with the stipulation that I keep Mom and pay out to the others.

That fall, Otto and I married and set up housekeeping on the home place with Mom.

Then Dad returned after 18 months. He purchased Carl Muir's farm, and they tried again to farm, but their age was against them so, in 1961, they retired and Mom moved in with us.

Dad also came a year later. They lived with us for nine years. Mom passed away in 1966 and Dad in 1975. He was then 89 years old, so I don't think hard work kills anyone, as he certainly worked hard.

Chapter 3: Aspen Ridge



Aspen Ridge School District #4348
by Martha (Hennig) Gitzel

The first Aspen Ridge School opened in 1928 and was located on the north west corner of SW 24-70-9-W6, across the road southwest from Henry Sieker's. Persons instrumental in organizing this rural district and getting the school built were Mr. Roland Young, Mr. Fred Paverly, Mr. R. (Cap) Campbell, and Mr. Frank Willsey, and others.

Mr. Young came to the district after World War I, Willseys in 1921, and others who were there prior to 1928 were Paverly, Campbell, Smith, Stefan, Sieker, Marth, Ryll, Paul Schultz, Dombrova, Olson, Reinitz, Lange, Muir, McDougall, McLennan, Anderson, V. Mayer, Montgomery, Hack, D. Paul, H. Thomsen, Rautenstrauch, while more settlers arrived in 1929 and 1930, namely Emil Schultz, Grubb, Zelling, Bauer, Hennig, Golnick, Grams, Roth, Stierle, Clayton, Gass, L. Heikel, and others. (Please pardon any errors or omissions. There are no registers or files for 1928-1938, at the County Office anymore).



Aspen Ridge, 1932-34, a picnic by the river.
Left-Marion Grubb, Glen Grubb, Jack Willsey, Helmut Hack, Siegfried Hennig, Hugo Zelling, Gertie Madill, Marjorie Willsey, Irene McDougall, Bernice Grubb;
Sitting: Dorothy Grubb, Olga Hennig, Frances Willsey, Olinda Bauer.



Standing L. to R. Werner Marth, ? ?, Leona Zelling, Jack Willsey, Margaret Hennig, Frances Willsey, Viola Willsey, Martha Olsson, Glen Grubb, Grace Paverly, Dorothy Grubb, Freda Zelling, Georgia Kaufman, Dorothy Paverly.
Kneeling: Albert Paverly, Bert Grubb, Hans Sieker, Edmund Stefan, Bertha Schultz, Jean Willsey, Jean Paverly, Lori Sieker;
Sitting: Louise Willsey, Herman Reinitz, Adolf Schultz, Dick Paverly.

At any rate there were enough children to warrant the opening of the school. The teachers were: 1928-1930 Miss Broadbridge, 1930-1932 Miss Winona Howell, 1932-1934 Miss Martha Hennig, 1934-1935 Mr. Joe Montgomery, 1935-1937 Mrs. Crouse, Miss Annie Walker, 1937-1938 Mr. Elbridge E. Green.

The following is a list of the pupils attending in 1935: Edmund Stefan, Lore Sieker, Hilda Dombrova, Hans Sieker, Ewald Ryll, Richard Paverly, Jean Paverly, Jean Willsey, Georgia Kaufman, William Schultz, Albert Paverly, Bertha Schultz, Bert Grubb, Martha Olson, Margaret Hennig, Werner Marth, Viola Willsey, Leona Zelling, Freda Zelling, Dorothy Grubb, Ella Dombrova, Jack Willsey, Helmut Hack, Frances Willsey, Ollinda Bauer, Eleanora Meyer, Dorothy Paverly, Knut Olson, Heinz Marth, Grace Paverly, Siegfried Hennig, Irma Reinitz, Olga Hennig, Otto Hack. Total enrollment was

34. Perfect punctuality and attendance — Richard, Jean and Albert Paverly, and Hans and Lore Sieker.

(The following news items from the Northern Tribune were gleaned from Miss Isabel Campbell's files and library. Our sincere thanks to her.)

These excerpts show the rural school not only as a centre of learning, but also the community centre for recreation, sports, social and cultural activities, political meetings and church services. These items are recorded here as they were published chronologically.

Community Club is forging ahead with the work of the literary and dramatic committee, but the dance committee has kept the ball rolling. The dances are such that people drive 15 or 16 miles to attend them. The music is supplied entirely by local talent.

School closed last Friday, June 30, and three schools, Aspen Ridge, Lower Beaverlodge, and Two Rivers, celebrated with a school picnic at the Beaverlodge River. The schools competed in sports for points and Lower Beaverlodge was leader with 106 points, Aspen Ridge 67 points, and Two Rivers with 57 points. However, A.R.S. tug-of-war team (four boys and four girls) brought home the honors by defeating Two Rivers team in two straight pulls and taking down the Lower Beaverlodge team in like fashion. The boys and girls won second in the relay. Frances Willsey won second in the high jump and Frank Dombrova in the boys high jump. After supper ice cream was served to all and an impromptu softball game ended the sports program and all went home tired and happy.

The evening was spent in dancing at A.R.S., the music being supplied by the Bush Chopper's Hay Wire Orchestra.

1936, February 6 — The last payment has finally been made on our piano, which was purchased in 1930, and a big sigh of relief goes up. The patience of the vendors in this case is worthy of mention.

Tuesday, April 29, 1937 — the Aspen Ridge pupils put on an excellent entertainment in connection with their enterprise work. Between song and extremely funny dialogue, "Awful Boats", the children explained the meaning of their exhibits in connection with their study of "Water and Life" and "The Home", and in answer to questions given by grade seven and nine the different pupils gave information they had to look up for themselves in many sorts of reference books. When finished each child had told of some part of their study of "The Home" or of "Water and Life".

The whole program was excellent and proved undoubtedly the value of enterprise work. Mrs. Crouse and her school children are to be congratulated on the results of their efforts.

After the guests had inspected the exhibits the hosts and hostesses treated their guests to a real nice surprise — such a lot of lovely cakes and tea. Thank you Mrs. Crouse and Aspen Ridge pupils for a real nice time.

1937, June 24 — Representatives from here attended a "persuasion" meeting at Aspen Ridge addressed by Mr. L.A. Walker, the district school inspector, regarding formation of School Division #14 by combining several rural districts.

The boundaries of four districts between the Red Willow and Spring Creek were decided on. This includes the new area mapped out to cut off part of Millarston at the Range Line and to extend eastwards to Pipestone Creek; also a new area west of the Creek to take in part of the old Aspen Ridge. (New Aspen Ridge School Division)

Mr. Walker also explained at length the proposed amalgamation of 76 districts. At the conclusion a vote was taken and with the exception of Captain Bob Campbell all were in favor. Captain Campbell expressed the opinion that the amalgamation would have the same or even greater difficulty in collection of taxes. Should this be so the larger unit would be unable to operate. This point appears to be one of great importance.

The chief points of benefit under the new scheme appear to be:

1. Provision of essential medical service from birth to the time of leaving school, provided by a full-time medico.

2. Teachers' salaries would be paid. The security of this knowledge would attract the best type of individual to the teaching profession.

3. It would be possible to set up rural high schools and vocational training centres.

Mr. Roland Young in a well directed speech stressed the fact that under the present lack of system in our rural school education children left school entirely unfitted for life, both physically and mentally.

The larger division by provision of medical and physical training facilities should be of great benefit to Alberta.

1937, September 23 — The western portion of the present Aspen Ridge School District together with certain lands in unorganized territory to the south and west has been organized to form a new school district. Meeting in the Aspen Ridge School last Saturday, the ratepayers of the proposed district voted almost unanimously to go ahead with the project. After balloting on six names nominated, the following were elected as trustees: Frank Gass, Roland S. Young, Philip Hennig. (This new district became Aspen Dale School District #4792.)

1937, September 30 — The West Side had their meeting last week and since Mr. P. Hennig, Mr. R.S. Young and Mr. Frank Gass were elected trustees we expect to see a new school district (Aspen Dale) in the West Side area.

September, 1938, saw the old school district of Aspen Ridge split into a new Aspen Ridge on the east and Aspen Dale on the west. Aspen Ridge retained its original School district number (4348) but got a new school house and a new site, SE 29-70-8-W6.

The following are the teachers who taught at the new Aspen Ridge school from 1938 until it closed in 1957, when the elementary and junior high pupils were vanned to the centralized school in Wembley, and the high school students to Beaverlodge.

Elbridge E. Green was the teacher in 1938-39. Harry G. Sherk taught from 1939 to 1941, A.E. McCready from 1941 to 1942, Ingibjorg Jakobson (Olsson in April, 1943) from 1942 to 1945, Laura Bohme from April to June in 1945, and then Mrs. Olsson again until 1947.

From September to December, 1947, Mary Funnell supervised the students at the school, then from January to June of 1948 they took correspondence at home. In the 1948-49 term, Miss Blanche Regimbald supervised, and from 1949 to 1951 Miss Nora Giesbrect was the supervisor, followed by Miss Albina Sawchuk in 1951-52. Miss Audrey Sutherland was the teacher from April, 1952 until June, 1953. In September 1953, Mrs. Ingibjorg Olsson came to teach until 1955, followed by Florence M. Nel for one year, and Mrs. E. Rose and Mrs. Ione Smith for the final year.

The number of pupils attending Aspen Ridge School during this period ranged from five to 22.

Pupils who attended when school opened in 1938 were Jenny Dombrova, Elsie Schultz, Adam Sask, James Skillen, Mary Skillen, Minnie Sask, Gladys Jensen, Walter Sask, Edmund Stefan, William Sask, George Sanders, Elmer Sanders, Hilda Dombrova, Edwin Johnson, Martha Olsson, Helmut Hack.

Pupils who attended the last year (1956-1957) when this school was closed for good were Ruth Dombrova, Beryl Metituk, Bettie Thomsen, Michael Metituk, Mary Rose, Stanley Dombrova, Hilda Schultz, Louise Thomsen, Diane McAuley, Irwin Sieker, Evelyn Thomsen, Theodore Thomsen, Sharon Metituk, Mansell Koll, Edna Schultz, Robert Sieker, and Marion Thomsen.

"This and That or As It Was Then" — excerpts from Aspen Ridge files at the County Office, noted items that might be of comparative interest, and items that point out problems even under School Division #14, and County System.

-1940 A piano was purchased for the school for $100.

-1944 Herb Dombrova delivered firewood to the school at one dollar and five cents per cord.

-1938 The School Library grant was mixed up with Aspen Dale School. The old library books went with the old school that was moved to the new Aspen Dale District. So Aspen Dale had a double allowance of books because they also got the library grant for the new district, while the old district with the new school house had "none".

-1943 March — Miss Skillen packed the water for the school at one dollar per month.

-1951 February 26 — Meeting - Local board of trustees: Walter Reinitz - secretary and chairman, Sam Skillen trustee, for three years, and Henry Thomsen also trustee for three years. Complaints sent to County School Committee - 1 Have had only supervisor and correspondence for four years and are urgently requesting a qualified teacher. 2. Abandoned well in the school yard is a dangerous trap. 3. No dividing stalls in barn, make it hazardous for children. 4. Gateless, broken, smooth wire fence is inadequate. "Who is responsible for this work" since it was taken out of the hands of the local board? Jean B. McCune, secretary-treasurer of County #1 advised that the School Committee would give these matters the required attention.

-1952 On September 6, Miss Audrey J. Sutherland, the teacher agreed to do the janitor work.

We note that in 1953, the teacherage from Two Rivers was moved to Aspen Ridge.

-1957 June 30 the school closed completely, pupils to be bussed to Wembley.

-1962 December 18 — For sale: Site and buildings located on SE 29-70-8-W6, Aspen Ridge School #4348. The school house was sold to Mr. Henry Thomsen for $435.53 (by tender). Mr. Herb Dombrova bought the school site later.

Thus, the last landmark of the old rural district is gone. The centres of learning and community activities have shifted to the urban centres. How has this affected the life style and attitudes in our rural communities? Each to his or her own memories, reflections, and evaluations! How often we indulge in reminiscenses! What more can I say?

The Klondike Trail Mutual Telephone Company

by Agnes Taylor

In 1950, 13 farmers met at the home of E.I. Breitkreutz to discuss the possibility of forming a telephone company. This idea was spurred on by Ernie Breitkreutz who had moved from the Aspen Dale district which already had the telephone for quite a number of years. So not having one in his new home started the ball, as you might say, rolling. It was at this first meeting the name "Klondike Trail Mutual Telephone Company" was voted on and passed. But checking the records they never really got down to real business until early 1953 with completion in late 1954, just in time to wish everyone the Seasons Greetings for Christmas and the New Year.

This line took in the Aspen Ridge and Klondike Trail districts as well as members along its route in the Wembley area.

As time went on our line built up to 27 members. It was really loaded but we had a good line, each member willing to give it up, especially in times of emergencies. It was finally divided into three separate lines, still handled under the same executive.

In 1950 Mr. Gust Gitzel was the first chairman with E.I. Breitkreutz secretary-treasurer. In 1953 Mr. Gitzel was still chairman and Helen Taylor secretary-treasurer. As the years passed the chairman changed many times but Helen Taylor remained secretary-treasurer until March 1957 at which time the position was taken over by Agnes Taylor and lasted for the next 15 years.

In 1972 the government then took it over and built it underground, at which time the dial telephone was installed in each home, with each line having, at the most, four members. Quite a change from our first loaded line.

Through this change, I might add, one misses the closeness of a well-knit community.

George Bauer Family

by Anna Stoll and Irene Ford

Our dad was born in Germany and upon the death of his parents, he was taken by a couple to Odessa, Russia. He left Russia at 13 years of age and stowed away on a ship sailing for the United States, ending up in North Dakota.

In 1905, at the age of 15 or 16, he came to Canada.

Our mother, Lydia Kuger, came to Canada from Germany in 1905, along with her family.

Mother and Dad were married in 1910. They have five children; Emma, Anna, John, Irene, and Olinda.

Mother passed away at Empress, Alberta in 1925.

After this we moved to Mannville. While there Emma, the eldest, married Henry Thomsen in 1928. The rest of us left there the spring of 1930, travelling by train for one week, arriving in Wembley, March 14. We lived in Wembley until the end of June. The children attended school in the United Church.

Dad took up a homestead NE 12-70-9-W6 in the Aspen Ridge district, and built a log house. We moved out there in July 1930.

The land was all cleared by hand, then broke by horses which was a lot of hard work. Dad also worked on threshing outfits every fall.

There were lots of blueberries. We children used to pick and sell them for five cents a pound, all cleaned or people just wouldn't buy them.

We had to walk four miles to school at Aspen Ridge.

Our nearest neighbors were the McDougalls and the Garretts, about one and a half miles north of us. Our nearest doctor was Dr. Carlisle in Wembley, ten miles away.



The Bauer family: Standing: Irène, Annie, Olinda; Mr. and Mrs. Bauer sitting.

On Sundays we drove, by horse and buggy or sleigh in the winter, to St. John's Lutheran Church, which was about eight miles away. Reverend Wildgrube was the minister.

In 1934, Dad married Mrs. Rielling who lived about three miles east.

Leaving the farm in 1940, Dad and our step-mother went to Stony Plain, returning again in 1942, at this time selling the farm and living in Wembley. He worked as caretaker for the curling rink, as well as janitor work at the Wembley school. Then they moved back to Stony Plain in 1946. Mrs. Bauer passed away there in 1949.

Dad then married Katherine Netzler in 1950, who passed away in 1958.

Dad passed away March 4, 1969 and is buried in St. Matthews cemetery at Stony Plain.

Emma passed away in 1937 at Wembley. Anna, Mrs. George Stoll, lives in Grande Prairie. John, married, lives at Kamloops, B.C. Irene, Mrs. Elmer Ford, lives in Wembley. Olinda, Mrs. Charles Rainer, passed away in Quesnel, B.C. February 7, 1977.

Harry Broadhurst

by Jessie Broadhurst

Harry was born in England, the son of a Welsh coal miner with very little schooling, who felt his sons didn't need an education either. The family came out to Kindersley, Saskatchewan and farmed. Harry left the family farm in 1930 to head for the Peace country, that he had heard so much about; settling in the Grande Prairie and Wembley areas.

He had many fond memories of Mr. and Mrs. Abe Smith, for whom he worked; also Agnes, Dick, and Alice, the family. Among his many friends was Robert E. Campbell, rancher and guide, with whom Harry had many political discussions, which sparked his later interest in community affairs.

He joined the Air Force in 1942, being stationed at Claresholm and Medicine Hat - a childhood knee injury deprived him of overseas service. About this time he married Jessie Millar of Lethbridge, Alberta. On leaving the services, they moved to Kimberley, B.C. where his parents then resided.

He worked as electrician at Cominco Concentrator. His death occurred in 1975, believed to have suffered a heart attack and fell in the path of the ore train. His two sons, Gerald and James and their families live in Kimberley, sharing his love of fishing and hunting.

Harry was school trustee for 14 years, 11 of these as Chairman. During this time, he was instrumental in obtaining for Kimberley the present modern, well-equipped vocational wing at Selkirk School.

He served on city council for three years. He was a long time active member of the Social Credit Party. In 1969, he was candidate for his riding and was narrowly defeated in that election.

He was deeply interested in the Royal Canadian Legion. He was Branch President in 1953, rising by 1971 to Provincial President and receiving the Legion's Meritorious Service Award. Welfare of the Veteran was his special concern.

In the sports field, Harry succeeded in getting the Kimberley Dynamite Hockey Team into the B.C. Hall of Fame.



Harry and Jessie Broadhurst.

The "Cap" Campbell Family

"Bob" Campbell was born in Lanark County, Ontario, in August, 1871, of Irish parents, moving to Simcoe the following year where he was raised and educated as a school teacher and stenographer. Heeding the advice of one of his peers to "Go west young man" he left Ontario in June, 1893, reaching Regina the same year. He taught school in and around this area for two years at which time he met and married Stella Crosier whose home was at Moose Jaw.

Finding teachers' salaries more lucrative farther west the Campbells moved and took up residence in Banff.

As an off duty hobby Bob took up packing and guiding for the Canadian Pacific Railroad. His hobby eventually took up so much of his time he retired from teaching and went into business full time as a partner with Mr. Tom Wilson, a real pioneer in the Canadian Rockies.

In 1908 he became a charter member of the Calgary Grain Exchange and four years later was elected to the Alberta Legislature representing the riding of Rocky Mountain House as an Independent Conservative.

In World War I he enlisted in the 192nd Battalion and served two years overseas returning home to Banff in the spring of 1919.

After finalizing his business interests in southern Alberta, he moved to the Peace River District with the intention of ranching and guiding hunters by packtrain to the mountains. As the country settled with "Open Range" fast disappearing the ranching had to be curtailed and so he turned to farming.

"Cap" and Stella retired from this vocation in 1943 moving to the west coast where they managed an apartment complex in Victoria. In 1953 they moved and took up residence with their daughter Gladys in Calgary.

When Bob was a young lad in Ontario the main trail started at Muddy York, now Toronto, ran north west to Lake Simcoe to be crossed by boat at a point where Barrie now stands and then west to what is now known as Wasaga Beach. This road or trail ran through the Campbell farm. Strange as it may seem the Main Trail has been persistent in following Bob and Stella all their life time, for it is well remembered in the early days before the town of Wembley or the school district of Aspen Ridge, the angle trail southwest to the forks of the Red Willow and Beaverlodge ran through the yard and by the ranch house of "Cap" and Stella, becoming the unofficial stopping place for many a cold and weary traveler.

Bob Campbell taught school at the Hillhead school for one year after Fred Barber left. He was just filling in until another teacher could be found.

The Campbells had one daughter Gladys and one son Dan. Gladys and husband, Dan McKillop, lived in Calgary. They had two daughters, Jean and Donna, Dan and his wife had one boy.

Dan Campbell was news man over CFRN radio for a number of years. He then moved to Edmonton and worked for the government in the Travel and Tourist industry for quite some time. They then retired at the west coast.

The Frank Dombrova Family

by Jenny (Dombrova) Tetreau

Frank Dombrova (Franz Dombrowa) came from Germany to Stony Plain, Alberta in 1924. In 1925 his wife Johanna and their five children Martha, Frank, Herbert, Ella and Elfie joined him in this new land. A son Albert was born to them but sorrow also took away one of their children, Elfie, then two years old. With sorrow in their hearts but hope for the future they left Stony Plain and early in 1927 came to Wembley, Alberta.

On April 4, 1927 he filed on his homestead, SE 30-70-8-W6. Only six days later a daughter, Hilda Marie, was born. Frank was a charter member of the St. John's Lutheran Church and the first baptism was performed for their daughter, Hilda Marie, on May 8, 1927. Sorrow came again with the death of their son, Albert, who died



Johanna, Frank and Jenny Dombrova.

at the young age of one year. His was the first funeral held in the Lutheran Church.

Years of hard work followed with most of the people concerned only with their farms, school and church. Dombrova's oldest daughter, Martha, was in the first confirmation class in the St. John's Lutheran Church held on March 24, 1929.

A daughter, Jenny Ruth, was born to Frank and Johanna on January 4, 1932. It was a proud day on the 13 of July, 1932 when Frank received title to his land. Only 12 short years later Frank Edward Otto died December 6, 1944 at the age of 49. His wife Johanna died June 18, 1961. All their children married and live in the Peace River country. On January 1, 1979 there were 19 grandchildren and 35 great grandchildren from Frank and Johanna Dombrova.



Hilda, Martha, Frank, Ella, Herbert, Jenny Dombrova.

Robert Lewis and Natika Garrett

by Annie (Johnson) Currie

The Garretts came to their homestead SE 24-9-70-W6 by 1919 or 1920. I knew them from 1924 on. They lived in a big, beautiful log house of their own making. In 1930, she fell heir to a substantial sum of money and a train car full of antiques; this completely changed their style of life. My first husband, Carl Johnson, did a lot of building for them, a beautiful barn and many other livestock buildings. Slim Russel managed the place for them.

Bob, in the early days, was an ardent hunter. Natika was one of the best gardeners in the Peace, and in the early twenties, her place looked like B.C.'s Butchart Gardens. She brought plants from the United States. The inside of her house was equal to the outdoors; beautiful antique furniture of good wood as well as plants. I think it was New Orleans where a lot of the furniture came from.

Natika was alwo an extra good butter maker and sold it.

During the period Natika spent in the University Hospital, before her death in 1946, she took a craving for red salmon, which could not be located any where in Edmonton. She told the nurse to write to Bob Kranz in Wembley and ask him to send her some. He shipped a whole case of small tins of the salmon to her.

Bob, who was born in 1894, passed away in 1951.

The Siegfried Hennig Family

I, Anna Hennig, was born in Stony Plain and was three years old when my parents, Wilhemina and Louis Schoepp, moved to Wembley. There was always a lot of activity at home with 12 sisters and brothers around. We also had a grandfather living with us who operated a blacksmith shop in our yard. We always enjoyed listening to his stories from the old country. We also made sure grandfather's wood box was full on those rare occasions when he went to town because he always brought us some candy. I went to school at St. John's Lutheran School for eight years, then took grade nine at Lower Beaverlodge.



Siegfried & Anna Hennig.



The S. Hennig family. L. to R. Philip, Rita, Dorothy, Calvin, Timothy, Howard, Peter in front.

In 1946, Mom and Dad moved to Vernon, B.C. for four years. I came back in 1949 and married Siegfried Hennig. We moved onto the farm that Siegfried had taken over from his dad, Philip Hennig, two years before. We started out on two quarters of land, with close to 100 acres under cultivation, 35 of this was new land which the men cleared and broke. We moved into an old log house that the original owner, Robert Campbell, had built. The other buildings were also log with sod or straw roofs. We had a well which Dad Hennig had Mr. Gus Klettke drill in 1948. Our transportation the first year was by horses.

In 1950, the first of our seven children, Dorothy, was born. We also got our first car and an A R John Deere tractor from Herman Breitkreutz. In the next 20 years, with the help of our children and bigger machinery, we were able to clear and break 250 acres. They didn't always enjoy seeing the written invitation their Mom left on the kitchen table when they came home from school. It was an invitation to have a picnic lunch in the root patch, then pick roots until chore time!

In the fall of 1954, we were able to talk to our neighbours by phone. March 1955 marked another milestone for the whole area, we were able to switch on the electric lights. All of this made life easier and brighter for everyone.

In 1957 we built our new home which we all enjoyed very much. A few years later, we purchased another quarter of land adjoining ours, from Dan Kuntz. In 1973, we purchased our present home from R.A. Nowoczin and in 1975, we also bought the Walter Young farm.



Siegfried Hennig first home. The old Robert Campbell house.

Our children were all getting an education through elementary and junior high school in Wembley and high school in Beaverlodge. Dorothy then took her nurses' training in Lethbridge. This is where she also met and married Bob (Robert) Simpson in 1972. Dorothy and Bob have two sons, Ryan five years old and Patrick two. They're living on an acreage near Dawson Creek. Bob works for Dawson Carland and Dorothy has done some part time nursing.

Rita stayed home for a while after she finished grade 12, then went to work for the Royal Bank in Grande Prairie. Rita married Jody (Gerald) Bain in 1975 and they are now living on a farm in the Elmworth area. Jody is farming together with his dad, George Bain. Rita and Jody have a year old daughter, Robin.

After Philip finished grade 12, he took his apprenticeship as a machinist at Fenley Machine, then went to SAIT in Calgary for his courses. He now is a machinist working at Fludic Power. He bought a house and lives in Grande Prairie.

Howard finished grade 12, then took a two year agriculture course at the Fairview College. Howard bought the former home quarter of land and is farming together with his dad. In the slack season, he drove a truck for Wally's Trucking, and is also a spare bus driver. At present, he is working for Canfor.

Calvin also finished his grade 12, had done some road work for the county and presently is employed with Petterson Well Drilling from La Glace.

Timothy is taking his grade 12 this year. He will go on into training as a tradesman. Timothy is active in the 4-H again this year, and also in the Young People Society in the church.

Peter is in grade five this yeat and plays trombone in the school band. He is also active in his first year in the 4-H. Peter enjoys playing hockey and has been on a team for the past four years.

One of my hobbies is gardening and since Siegfried built me a green house, I have grown many plants. I have a large flower garden and have entered flowers at the fairs. I'm happy to say, won prizes too.

We have been active members of St. John's Lutheran Church and its various organizations, including the Lutheran Layman's League, which sponsors the Lutheran Hour and also the Lutheran Women's Missionary League. Siegfried and the children have been involved with 4-H for the last several years. They find this a useful and rewarding experience.

Harry and Ann Johnson

by Harry Johnson

April 1928, we arrived in Wembley which was the end of the steel. We had $5 to our name. We stayed at the Western Hotel, owned by a Mr. Johnson.

The day after we landed in Wembley, I took a walk around town in about three inches of mud and water. As I walked by an open garage, I saw a man's feet sticking out from under a car in the garage, spoke to him, but got no answer so I pulled him out. His face was blue and swelled up and his tongue all swollen. He was like a dead man. I threw him over my shoulder and walked toward main street; saw a girl, who happened to be Gertie Ferguson, who worked for the Carlisles. I yelled, asking her if she knew who this man was, she started to cry and told me it was Dr. Carlisle. She told me where his house was and I carried him in and put him on the couch. It was



Eddie Johnson and pal, Lloyd Finch leading the cows out.

two or three hours before they revived him. The doctor had been gassed. By the time I got there, the motor was dead with the ignition still on. Guess it ran out of gas. Lucky I came along as he was just about a gonner when I arrived. So I guess I did my good deed for that day!

Ann got a job helping Mrs. Finch, who ran a kind of boarding house, for her board. I got a job in the lumber yard, piling lumber, and ate at the Chinaman's.

In a short while, I started a dray business. Dinty Moore had one, but spent most of his time in the beer parlor, run by Mr. Fletcher. Joe Jenson, a good hearted scout, loaned me a team to get started and I bought an Adams wagon from agent Jim Castleman. I bought lumber for a dray bed and a 12 by 16 shack. Ann boarded four bank employees in this shack; Mr. Lamont, the manager, Mary Hallot, and Harold Ardley.

I was really busy, dug quite a few basements with team and scraper. Lots of guys, who rode the rods, came into town and wanted work. I'd give them a bottle of milk, loaf of bread and some baloney before they started on the pick and shovel. Then two dollars a day after and they were glad of it.

I bought, on time, a new set of harness, cookstove, dishes, etc., everything that one needs from hardware man, Bert Bromley. Also bought a town lot for $50.



Harry, Ann and Eddie Johnson on their homestead on the edge of the Wapiti River.

Then I purchased the mail contract from Dinty Moore for $50 which payed $4.50 per month for hauling mail. Soon I made a deal with the post office for more money. There was so much mail coming in then, all I could pile on the dray bed.

It was in 1930 that we moved out to a homestead, ten miles south, with a good running spring on it, and found a corral where someone had sheep eight years before. I plowed it up in the fall and you should have seen the garden off that rich land. Largest strawberries you ever saw, corn seven feet high, and we had corn and tomatoes by July 12. Everything was good! We planted a lard pail of potato eyes and got 12 sacks out of them. There were potatoes everywhere! We loaded up a Bennet buggy and hauled a load to town and I think we got $5 for the works.

Dan Paul helped me haul an old granary, from Wembley, to the homestead and that is what we lived in while we were putting up a log house. In the meantime, a big wind came along and fanned a fire that burned the shack. We had 100 pounds of sugar to put down the fruit and $3 in our purse. Everything burned but the cookstove which I threw a chain around and pulled out with the team. I had gone in before the fire got too hot and picked up the cream separator tearing the leg screws out of the floor. I was strong as a bull in those days. After that we lived in a tent.

Ann put the flooring in the log house which was six inch ship lap while I was out threshing (between rains). October 31, Halloween night, we moved into the log house. It was like going into a mansion. There was a real blizzard blowing. We had a 45 gallon drum for a heating stove. It would take wood nearly three feet long. We sure kept warm, lots of poplar outside, most of it cut up. There were no chain saws in those days, just an axe and swede saw.

We stayed on the homestead for ten years, then got a job on the Crane-William farm near Dimsdale. The log house they gave us to live in was full of bed bugs, so we fumigated it. Then in April, we had all the doors and windows closed as we had a chicken incubator just about ready to hatch. We had been painting with quick drying paint and the house was full of fumes. When I lit the cook stove, the fumes caught fire and it was all over the place. Son Eddie was asleep upstairs and I got him out. Ann burned most of the hair off her head and her right arm. We got out, but lost everything.

Ann got a job in a Chinese restaurant and I got a job at the Ford garage in Grande Prairie until the boom at Dawson Creek came. We then moved up there where I got work in the Ford garage for a while. Then we started a restaurant and had four girls working for us. Talk about busy! Going day and night. Three months later we sold out for $2200.

Bert Osborne came to Dawson Creek and I sold him the homestead for $300.

While we were in Grande Prairie, I bought three lots, a nice little house with a double garage, for $150 cash, team of horses, harness and sleigh, just four blocks north of the old post office. Just think what it would be worth today!

In 1945, we drove out to Nelson, B.C. and stayed there for ten years. Then moved back to Stettler and bought an old garage in Erskine, eight miles west. I worked there for 18 years before selling out in 1975, for a pretty good price. Then moved with a double wide trailer and other buildings to Alix, 16 miles west. So here we are retired, both over 75 and still pretty active. I have a wonderful bird dog and do a bit of hunting in the fall.

Besides having a son Eddie, we had a daughter born to us in 1942. She is now married and living in Calgary. They have one girl, 18 years old and two boys, 14 and 16.

A few more memories of the homestead; We had lots of ups and downs, like most old timers had in a life time. I broke my leg twice while on the homestead, then when we were in Dawson Creek, I had a truck tire I was fixing, blow out and broke my leg again - both bones. Ed broke his arm while on the homestead, but they were good old days, we enjoyed every minute of it.

At one time we bought a Holstein cow from Hugh Allen. He had four calves on her she gave so much milk. We had to milk her three times a day - she gave five large pails of milk. We sold milk and butter all over Wembley, raised a pig, fed a calf, and gave Matt Graham a quart a day for interest as we had borrowed $75 from him to buy the cow. We gave him ten dollars a month to pay back the loan.

I also hauled logs, enough to build a flour mill for Bob Kranz. Logs were 40 feet by eight inches at the small end. I cut and loaded them with a team and could only haul three at a time up the Wapiti hill, which took me two days to get the load of six logs hauled to Wembley for $1 a log. That amounted to ten hours work a day for me and the team for three dollars.

We hauled some birch logs off an island six miles west on the river ice. It was 56 degrees below zero when we were coming home. The water had broken through the ice at the rapids. Of course it was dark and I couldn't see it and I drove right into two feet of water and slush. The team couldn't pull it any further, so had to leave the loads and they froze in. The next day we had to unload and chop the sleighs out.

The 1970 Pioneers: Cliff and Martha May

"How would you like to move to Grande Prairie?"

"Sure!" was my response to Cliff's question in our Calgary living room, when he first read of a job opportunity at Proctor and Gamble Pulp Mill for an Electrical Trainer. Six months later, December 23, 1974, found the city slickers located on Val Hennig's picture-



Back row: L. to R. Stan Utz, AnnaLee Utz, Bevan May, Val Wiebe, Arnie Wiebe;
Front row: Cliff May, Martha May and Amber Wiebe.

book farm in the Wembley Community. The experiences of the next two and one half years ranged from: plowing ourselves out after blizzards; pumping water from a well - - 80 strokes before the first drop reached the pail; chopping ice, to pump water from dugout to cistern, for household washing in mid winter; hiring a well dug in March, to hear the words, "a dry hole"; surviving the shock of the first spring in Peace River gumbo; getting accustomed to clouds of dust accompanying the dark masked criminals entering the house, after a few rounds on the summerfallow; to say nothing of the frustrating efforts of harvesting crops in rainy weather and being sent on business trips when the sun shone. Understandably, the dreams of a profit-making agricultural business, as a hobby, were short lived, and our efforts were turned to a nearby site on the Wapiti, close to Pipestone Creek, still trying to work out the pioneering spirit with which we were motivated. This time the quarter of bushland seemed ideal for establishing a year round retreat centre. The condition for purchase was a good well. This being obtained, we moved a mobile home onto the property. Then followed the construction of a machine shed and home which is nearing completion, January 1, 1980. We wait to see how the establishment of Kingsland Retreat will become a reality.

The Neil McDougall Story

by Annie Currie and Irene Stewart

The one thing that had the greatest influence on our coming to the Peace River was my mother's brother, James Howard, moving here in 1910. He and his wife, Katie, came in over the Edson Trail by horse and sleigh. They homesteaded land just east of the present townsite of Wembley.

Uncle Jim, along with Bill Craig, Alex Craig, J.O. Stewart, John Watson, Ross Beatty, and Gordon Cox formed the "Big Seven" Threshing outfit which did a lot of work throughout the district.

Jim and Katie resided on the homestead until his passing in the early 1920's. Katie later married Alex Muir and resided in the Wembley area until her passing. The land was eventually sold to Henry and Wesley Stokke.

The McDougall family arrived in the Wembley district in 1920. The family consisted of parents, Neil and Ida, four daughters, Nellie, Annie, Ida, and Irene, and one son John. The home place was in the Aspen Ridge district just south of Bob Garrett's.

Neil was born in Collingwood County, Ontario, and at an early age went to Bay City, Michigan, to become a surveyor and estimator in the then popular logging industry.

He later married Ida Howard, born in Bay City, Michigan, and they returned to Canada about 1900 and settled at Yellow Grass, Saskatchewan, where they lived for approximately five years. Daughter Nellie was born there. Later they moved to Melfort, Saskatchewan, where son John was born, from there to Fort and South Qu'Appelle where daughter, Annie, was born. Then on to Indian Head where daughter, Ida, was born, and next to Cypress Hills where they ranched for six years. Daughter, Irene, the last of the clan, was born there.

Then the terrible winter of 'twenty' hit and lasted long past the normal spring and feed for stock could not be purchased at any price. Horses and cattle died by the dozens from weakness and starvation. Letters from brother-in-law Jim Howard (Ida's brother) telling of the lush growth of peavine and grass in the Peace Country was just too tempting and with about two dozen head of horses and what cattle had survived, the McDougalls arrived in the Mighty Peace to make a new start.

Arriving in Grande Prairie July 4, 1920, one could look from the depot and count the stores and dwellings in one glance. Uncle Jim Howard was there to meet us and we still remember the treat of homemade ice cream made by Aunt Kate, kept frozen by the snow that was still unmelted in a bluff back of the house.

Neil and Ida rented land for a few years, spending five years on what was known as the old Ireland stopping place, then homesteaded in the Aspen Ridge district until their retirement years when they moved to Beaverlodge. They later moved to Wembley, where Neil passed away October 18, 1949. Ida and John moved to Grande Prairie.

We attended the Hillhead school just southwest of Wembley, and for high school we had to go to Lake Saskatoon. Recreation was very prominent, even in the early days; hockey in the winter, baseball and basketball in the summer. We were very proud of our girls basketball team in 1927. Some of the members of that team were Ethel Lock, Margaret and Isabel McNaught, Agnes Watson, Grace and Ruth Johnson, and myself. Several others took part at times.

Fishing and hunting brings back vivid memories of the early days as well. Grayling were very abundant in the Beaverlodge and Wapiti rivers. Prairie chicken and grouse were numerous, along with deer, moose, and elk. There never was open season on elk in those days.

Nellie married Sid Watson in 1926. They lived at Elmworth, Grande Prairie, then moved to Oliver, B.C. about 1968. Sid passed away November, 1979. Nellie is still there.

John, who never married, passed away at the age of 63.

Ida married Henry Rollin, who was a barber in Wembley for years. Ida worked in Kranz's store for a few years. They now live in Victoria, B.C.

Irene married Jock Stewart, son of J.O. (Ohmi) Stewart, prominent farmers in the district. Irene and Jock now farm north of Fort St. John, B.C.

I, Annie, worked in Kranz's store until 1929. That year I married Carl Johnson, then moved to Hythe. We lived in the Peace River country until moving to Kamloops, B.C. in 1946. Carl was a barber by trade, but most of his working years, he was a grain buyer for Midland Pacific Grain Company. Carl passed away of a heart attack while we were living at Kamloops.

The Johnson family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Jorgen Johnson; sons Jack, Andrew, Oliver, and Carl; daughters Ruth, Grace, and Sera of the U.S.A. The Johnsons owned and operated the "Western Hotel" in Wembley during the homestead days. The boys were very good carpenters. They helped build many buildings in Wembley including Bob Kranz's store.

I am now married to Clayton Thomas Currie and live in Oliver, B.C. and enjoy it very much. I have many fond memories of the Peace River country.

The Montgomery Family

by Leona and Joe Montgomery

Dad came from eastern Canada in 1906 to the Leo district, our nearest town being Byemoor, Alberta. He worked at different jobs and got some land for a farm. Mother and family, Kenneth, Clifford, and baby



Ken, Joe, & Cliff, sitting in front of their home down by the Wapiti.

Florence, came out in May, 1907. They lived at the Ramsey house until a sod house was built. In the next few years, Joe was born in 1908, Nada in 1910, I (Leona) in 1912, and Leo in 1915. We later had a lumber house to live in. The family lived there for 28 years. In the 1930's, it got so dry with dust storms, so we couldn't grow very good crops.

Our sister Florence married Clarence Rowat in 1926. They farmed for many years at Hackett and Dewberry. They had six children, but lost two little girls.

Ken worked for Clarence for a while. Later they sold out and moved to Duncan on Vancouver Island. The three girls; Vera, Erma, and Dorothy, and one boy, Alvin, are all married with families. Florence and Clarence both passed away in the 1960's.

Cliff and Ken came to Wembley in 1929 and homesteaded here. They returned to Byemoor in 1931 to bring their equipment and livestock to their homesteads. Our sister Nada came to stay with them soon after this.

I, Joe, came to Wembley on a visit in the summer of 1931. The next year, I came back to stay with my brothers.



The Montgomery's Clifford, Leona, Dad, Mother, Leo.

Nada was here for a few years — she had different jobs. She and Anna Hennig had a beauty shop in Wembley for a while. She then left Wembley, and in 1939, Nada married a miner, Tommy McQueen. They lived at Mercoal, Alberta until the mines closed, when they moved to Duncan, where they still live. They had two daughters; Sharon and Carol, who are now married.

Dad, Mother, Leona, and Leo left our hometown of Byemoor in 1935 and moved to Wembley. The government was helping people that wanted to move out. They came by train, Leo and Cliff riding with the stock on the freight train.

The first year I, Joe, worked with my brothers, clearing land and working their farm. I then taught Klondike Trail school for a year, and Aspen Ridge the next year. I bought the old Murray MacDonald quarter SW 36-70-9-W6, which my brothers farmed with me. I worked odd jobs for farmers in the district to supplement our income.

I sold my farm and livestock to Leo and Cliff and I began teaching again at Dewberry, Alberta. I married Margaret McKnight at Dewberry in 1940. We have two children, Sherrill, married and living in Toronto, and Brent, also married and living in Edmonton.

In 1942, I quit teaching and began work with the Alberta Liquor Control Board where I stayed until I retired in Edmonton where my wife and I still live. We still get back to Wembley once or twice a year to visit Leona and Ken and still see some of our friends, though many have moved away from there over the past years.

In April 1935, the family moved to the Kopp quarter and farmed it. One fall, Joe, Cliff and Dan Willsey went on a moose hunting trip and got two moose. Mother and I (Leona) canned 118 quarts, and Ken and Cliff got the same amount.

There was a sawmill down by the Wapiti, and the boys finished sawing logs for lumber there in April, 1936. We had to build a house on Joe's farm. It took them two days to haul the lumber from the sawmill. They moved a granary from the Kopp quarter to Joe's, and Dad stayed in it until the house was built to see that no one's cattle got into the crop.

In 1937 we moved from the Kopp farm to Joe's. One problem we had was water for the stock and ourselves, for quite a few years. Dad got money from our brother-in-law, Clarence, to get a well dug. Before that, the men had to haul snow and melt it in a horse tank with a heater in the tank. We had to put up ice from the river for drinking water, besides getting some water in cream cans from Con Rubie.

Mother was in the Grande Prairie Hospital a few times, the last time in April, 1944 when she passed away. Dad passed away August 8, 1946.

We had a bad scare early one morning in 1951. Cliff got up first to get the fires in the cookstove and heater going; when he opened the draft on the heater, I heard a roar and the pipes upstairs were on fire. It didn't take me long to get dressed, also Leo who slept upstairs. Leo went outside, climbed up on the roof and tore that long stovepipe chimney off. I was so excited, I was throwing water on everything in that room above the heater, as there was a lot of paper magazines and books there. The roof had started to blacken around where the pipes went through. I thought we were going to lose our home. We then added a large kitchen, made of logs that Fred Dolphin let us have, and Walter Young built a brick chimney which was much safer. In those years our fridge and lamps operated on coal oil.

On August 6, 1958, Raymond Willsey finished Ken and Fred Dolphin's house in Wembley.

In December 1960, Leo stayed with Ken and Fred for a while, as he wasn't feeling well. They took him to the Beaverlodge Hospital on December 6. He passed away December 16.

Fred Dolphin passed away on July 19, 1963. That left Ken living alone.

A school teacher friend of Joe's from Edmonton came here and bought some things from us for the museum. There was the old gramaphone and roll records, the wooden butter mixing bowl, two-one pound print butter makers, old Aladdin lamp and a small pistol.

Raymond Willsey with Cliff, Ken, and Peter Taylor helping, built two small rooms on Ken's house in Wembley May 25, 1964. Ken bought a roll of linoleum for the floor, and a cot for Cliff's room. Cliff got a dresser for $10 from George Anton from the plywood, and we got our first electric washing machine and two tubs from George. He let Cliff have them for $30.

After the harvest combining was completed, the garden taken in, my canning of fruit, pickles, jam, jelly, chicken, and vegetables was completed, we moved to Ken's on November 24, 1964 with the help of Harry and Pete Taylor.

Cliff rented the farm to Otto Stefan to put in and that winter he sold it to Erwin Schoepp.

March 1, 1965, a man representing Alberta for the art instruction schools came to see me about a drawing contest that I had entered the November before. Cliff and Ken got me to sign up for the correspondence Art Course. I finished in June 20, 1970. I put some of my paintings and pictures in the County Fair in Grande Prairie for the next six years. During that period, I won 15 first prizes, seven seconds, and four thirds. I have sold quite a few of my pictures, from pencil, water colors, and oil paintings.

Cliff passed away March 27, 1976 in the Beaverlodge Hospital.

Ken drove his car up to two weeks before his 80th birthday. He is now living at Central Park Lodge and has been for the last three years.

I have taken several trips by plane and bus to visit my brother Joe and family in Edmonton. Also sisters Nada, Florence and families at Duncan, B.C.

I had the bad luck to break my hip March 27, 1979 and was hospitalized for four weeks in Grande Prairie.

Lee Morin

I was born and raised at Normandeau in the Lac La Biche area. We were what you would call poor dirt farmers, as a good percentage of the soil was gumbo. To supplement the income, my dad would do custom sawing for the neighbours. Although we had milk cows and raised pigs and beef, we seldom butchered more than two pigs a year and one steer approximately every two years. The bulk of our meat supply was wild meat. My dad had always been a good hunter. He would take every opportunity to be out hunting ducks, geese or grouse, but his specialty was deer hunting. Seldom did he come back without having shot a deer.

As a ten year old, I caught the hunting and trapping bug. At the beginning, my older brothers used all kinds of excuses to leave me at home but after a few hunts they realized I was a big help in spotting muskrats, etc., and would help them with the skinning. When I turned 13, I began to hunt and trap on my own. Fur prices hit bottom



Lee Morin: Main trapping cabin in the north.

by then and few people did any trapping, but I was unable to quit.

The urge to be out hunting or checking the traps got me into more trouble than enough, what with playing hooky from school and neglecting my chores. I promised myself I would acquire my own trapline someday.

Soon I left home to seek my fortune. Spring of 1962 found me headed for Fort Nelson, after spending a few years working in the southern part of the province. Going through the Grande Prairie area, I was very much impressed with the Peace River country. The next two seasons found me trapping at Fort Nelson. I had been taken on as a partner by Jack Sullivan, who owned a trapline and had his own dog team. Due to poor health, Jack decided to sell. I had first chance to buy, but not having the money, I headed south again, to earn the required amount.

In 1965, I was back in the Peace country. By then Jack had sold his line, so I began to look for a trapline in Northern Alberta. My search found me in the Lands and Forest office in Peace River, where I acquired the rights to my trapping area approximately 100 miles northwest of Worsley.

For the next six years I made my home in Beaverlodge. Then, in the spring of 1971, I bought a farm, Sam Skillen's quarter, NW 28-70-8-W6.

The first few years I ran pack dogs and a snowmobile on the trapline. The snowmobile proved to be unreliable and uneconomical. My dream had always been to own a dog team, so I acquired some pups with the breed mixture I wanted and trained them myself. I raised pups to replace the older dogs in the team.

If I leave early in the fall for the trapline, I load the team into an aircraft and fly out to the forestry airstrip where I built my main cabin. After spring break-up, I have the aircraft pick us up again, on a pre-arranged date.



Lee Morin's dog team on the trapline.

Trapping with a dog team is a major undertaking. Each dog is different in character. A dog musher must study each one individually. Some dogs are born leaders, others prefer to follow. Very few dogs make good wheel dogs (that's the dog immediately in front of the toboggan). At present my wheel dog is the best I have ever known, and also the one in front of him. These two dogs go all out to please me.

Besides keeping these dogs from fighting amongst each other, one must be constantly alert in case they see a moose or caribou cross the trail or run ahead of us. The dogs will take off like a rocket and if I'm not fast enough to apply the brake, I am very likely to find myself and the toboggan wrapped around a spruce tree and the dogs long gone or all tangled up.

The rewards of running a dog team are many, regardless. While scouting ahead for a better trail, I only have to call or signal and the team will catch up, as before with the snowmobile I had to walk back for it. Plus being a lot of company, they have helped locate a lot of game.

If and when I have to camp out under my lean-to somewhere along the twenty miles between some of my cabins, I crawl into my sleeping bag with the satisfaction of knowing that in the morning even if it's 30 degrees below we can carry on regardless, as I have a good team tied up nearby.

I could go on and on writing about mushing dogs. At the present time, I am working on a book about my trapping experiences and hope to have it published in the near future.

On closing I shall mention, when someone asks me, "Which is the hardest working dog in a team?" I tell them, "The one behind the toboggan!"

The Olaf Olsson Family

by Lars Olsson

I, Lars, came to Canada along with two of my sisters, Charlotte and Hilda, from Forossa, Sweden, in 1926, on the boat "Aurania". We first heard of the Peace River country through advertising. It was advertised extensively all over Europe. The Canadian Pacific Railway made a real effort to contact as many names as they possible could find, through various courses, sending them a lot of literature, making it all look like a grand picture. They wanted married men with families to come. Work for young people in Sweden was hard to get, though, so we decided to come to the Peace River country and give it a try.

We crossed over to Liverpool, England, then on to London and came by boat to Quebec City, and travelled by train to Alberta. We came to Red Willow, 18 miles northwest of Stettler, Alberta, to work for our uncle and cousin for one and a half years on rented land.

Mother and Dad, along with the rest of the family (Sven, Tikla, Arvid, Freda, Knute, and Martha, who was only two years old at the time), came over in 1927, and rented a farm for one year in the Red Willow district. They then came to the Wembley district in April, 1928, and I came in June, and lived in the house on SE 8-71-8-W6 for one year. They then rented SW 5-71-8-W6 from Oscar Kenny for two years and lived in a little old log shack that was there.

Dad and Sven homesteaded N½ 20-70-8-W6 in 1928 and built a lumber home on it and a barn of rails and straw. They brought three horses, one mule and a cow with them from Red Willow. After arriving they lost their



Mrs. Olsson, 1926.

cow for one month. When they finally found it, it was held in a pound and had accumulated $30 in penalties against it. They decided to ship it through the Co-op and received $35 for it. Not any profit there, after paying its way from the Red Willow district!

Our first neighbors after moving onto our homesteads were the Frank Dombrova and Otto Kopp families.

Arvid and Knute went to the Wembley school. Ruth Robertson was their first teacher. Freda and Martha started school at Aspen Ridge.

I homesteaded SE 20-70-8-W6 from the Hudson's Bay Company in early 1940. I bought the Kastner house in Wembley and lived there off and on for four or five years. Later, I sold it to Mike Lett and bought the property that Albert Decock lived on from the town for $250 for land and shack. I have since built a new home on the land.

Mother passed away in 1954 at the age of 73 years and Dad passed away June 19, 1964 at the age of 86 years.



Lars Olsson, 1926.

Memories of Days Gone By

by Dan and Martha Paul

Dan Paul arrived in Wembley in 1927 coming from Scotland. In 1928 he decided to buy a homestead seven and a half miles south of Wembley, at NE 23-70-8-W6, in what was later known as the Aspen Ridge School District. Dan filed a claim on this quarter of land for $10, and like others had a three year term where ten acres had to be cleared. Each summer he set about and cleared ten acres, and at the end of three years the land would be his. There was bush all around with trails for roads. The summer of 1928 he met his neighbour across the road to the east, Paul Schultz, and they soon became friends helping one another on many occasions. Dan's only means of transportation was a wagon and horses, and at first borrowed horses from Millers to do his breaking.

On September 2, 1935 Dan married the lovely Martha Miller. At first both worked at Millers, as Martha also helped her dad on the fields.

Soon they built a log house on the homestead and later on, a barn, and Dan brought his bride out to pioneer with him. At that time there was no well, and water for cooking purposes had to be hauled seven and a half miles. A dugout or dam was made which took most of one summer, and which served as drinking water for the cattle and horses they had acquired. Martha had to use cheesecloth to screen the water for washing clothes due to the many bugs in the water.



Martha & Dan Paul with little Bobby taken on their homestead.

One of the highlights of those days was playing the radio which they had received as a wedding present. However, it couldn't be left on for more than 45 minutes at one time. "We had to drive seven and a half miles to get it recharged with a wet pack, and it cost 75¢ for this. We selected very carefully special favorite programs, and the news, and then shut it off. One day we listened to Red Skelton, another day it was Jack Benny, and Fibber McGee and Molly. Dan's favorite pastime was listening to the hockey game.

Once a week, someone would hitch up their horses and pick up everyone on the road to meet at someone's house for bridge. Then once a month we competed against teams at the Aspen Ridge School. The trophy was a set of deer horns. If the west (which was Aspen Dale) won it was hung on the west side of the wall, and if the east won, it was hung on the east side of the wall. The east was Aspen Ridge. Everyone had such a good time, and it didn't cost any money. At that time we would each bake a cake. Concentration was intense and competition keen. An average of 80-90 people attended these bridge functions, as all those south of the correction line took part.

Martha used to play the piano (mostly chording) from 7:00 p.m. until 4:00 a.m. for 65¢. Dan stayed at home babysitting. "I used to walk there and back, and coming back, I would cut across the pasture. I was scared to death," Martha says.

One winter when Dan was working in Grande Prairie, the weather was so cold — it was -60 degrees. Bobby, was around seven years and Dorothy was a baby. Bobby was at home from school with the whooping cough. Martha was milking four cows. That whole week the cows wouldn't go out to drink water. "I would have to bundle up with scarves around my face as you couldn't breathe in the cold air", Martha remembers. After finishing chores one evening, there was a knock on the door. It was Mr. Paverley, wanting to know if we needed anything from town, as he was going into town the next day. I didn't think so, but invited him in for a cup of coffee. It was so good to have someone to talk to. Pedro, the dog was so cold I allowed him to come into the house on a rug by the door. After Mr. Paverly left, Dorothy woke up and I discovered she had a fever. During the course of the night, she went into convulsions. When it was daylight, I sent Bobby over to Schultz's to get help. Mrs. Schultz came over, but said the roads were too icy for the horses and we didn't know how we could get Dorothy to the doctor. Mrs. Schultz stayed until I got the chores done, and then she sent her oldest daughter, Elsie over to stay with me. Elsie was a pillar of strength. My brother, Jack found out and he came with a truck and got us to a doctor."

One day, Lydia Schultz came over and she said they were going to butcher a pig. "You're in for some work," Martha told her. "Well, we have to," she said. A few days later we would render the lard. Later on they made sausages, and they invited us over for their home-made sausages. We would put the sausage in sealers.

We never had nicer neighbors — they were always hard at work. What company and comfort we would get from them. Living across from each other we were able to help one another with the land. Lydia was a hard worker, and a very kind person. You wouldn't go to her house but you would get a bun or a cup of coffee.

Bobby was about six and a half years old and went with Hector on the seeding machine. He was curious and stuck his finger in the wheels, cutting it badly. We rushed him to Dr. Miller who cleaned and dressed it. We were grateful that he was able to save the finger.

As the years went by, things became easier in some ways, and prices were better. However, Dan was able to get a good paying job and in 1947 we decided to sell our farm to Paul Schultz. We moved to Grande Prairie, and then brought our very first new car.

Dorothy is married to Ken Shore and lives in Long Island, New York and has two boys, ages 12 and 17.

Bob is working with Proctor and Gamble and living in Grande Prairie.

The Fred Paverly Family

Fred Paverly was born in Yorkshire, England in 1886. He was the youngest of a large farm family.

All his life he loved animals, especially horses. One of the things he enjoyed as a young man was riding after the hounds in the fox hunt.

He immigrated to Canada in 1912 arriving in Halifax March 21 on the Hesperian. On the trip Fred met and became friends with his future brother-in-law, John Thomas. Later John introduced him to his twin sister Winnifred. Mrs. Thomas had a boarding house in Calgary where Fred stayed when he first lived there.

From Halifax, Fred travelled by train to Revelstoke, B.C. He worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway mason gang. His first job was on the bridge at Sicamous. He worked at Radium Hot Springs when the Banff Windermere highway was first started. Later he worked on farms in the Calgary area. Wages were $35 per month, room and board included.

In 1913, Fred set out for the Peace River country. It was a very wet summer. He got as far as Athabasca but turned back because of the hordes of mosquitoes. He came back to Beiseker and worked on the farm during the summer. During the winter he worked in the bush for the East Kootenay Lumber Company at Local, B.C.

In the spring of 1914 he went to a tractor school in Calgary and also worked in a garage.

Fred and Winnifred postponed their wedding plans when World War I broke out in 1914. Fred enlisted in the army and served in France. He spent four years and six months in the Horse Artillery. Whenever he had leave he would go out to the farms and work with the peasants. He learned to speak French while he was there.

He fought in the battles at Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele where many of his closest buddies were lost. He was wounded and gassed and suffered the effects the rest of his life. He was a Life Member of the Royal Canadian Legion. After the Armistice he returned to Calgary.

In the winter of 1919 he attended Olds Agricultural School.

Fred and Winnifred were married in 1921 in Calgary. They went to Victoria for their honeymoon. They rented a farm at Shepard for seven years. They had the misfortune to have their crop frozen or hailed out in five of those seven years.



Mr. and Mrs. Fred Paverly Grace, Jean, Albert and Dorothy.

While they lived in Shepard, Dorothy, Grace, Albert, and Jean were born.

In 1927, Fred went to Wembley to look over the "promised land" and filed on a homestead. In April, 1928, Fred returned to Wembley. The family came later by train as a house had to be built.

Moving was a big event. They had three car loads of settlers effects (two box cars and a flat car for implements). Included were ten horses, a tractor, brush breaker, and a fair set of other implements.

At that time Wembley was booming as it was the end of steel. It was all open range and there were few buildings in the country. Although the land was surveyed there were few roads, just trails that stayed to the higher ground for the most part.

Fred brushed and broke 40 acres the first year putting 20 acres into oats for feed. Fred got a second quarter as a soldiers grant. He bought a half section from Harry Scott to complete the farm.

By this time Dorothy and Grace were school age so Fred worked with others on the school board to build the first school in the area, named Aspen Ridge.

Winnifred loved music and was a skilled pianist. She enjoyed playing for dances and social events at the school.

In October, 1929, Dick was born. In September that year it rained for one day and snowed for two days. A chinook followed and in two weeks they threshed dry oats.

A year and a half later, in May, following a winter of poor health and an accident Winnifred died. She was knocked down by a boar when she went out to chase away what she thought was a sow from hens with baby chicks.

Fred took a great pride in his farm and produced championship produce. He became World Wheat Champion at Chicago and won prizes for wheat at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto. He showed vegetables, grain, eggs, chickens and butter at fairs in Grande Prairie, Beaverlodge, and Wembley bringing home many ribbons and other awards. Fred loved his horses and successfully showed "Jumbo" at the Grande Prairie County Fair.

From 1942 to 1951 all five children attended Agricultural Schools at Olds and Vermilion.

Dorothy married George Chynoweth. They lived in Wainwright and later moved to Edmonton where George worked in construction until his death in 1976. Their two sons, Mark and Lynn, live in Edmonton.

Grace travelled extensively while she was with the Canadian Air Force. Later she lived in Washington, D.C. and Portland, Oregon. She married Stewart Murdoch and they live in Portland, Oregon. Stewart works for a steel company in Portland in sales and makes trips to Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C.

Albert farmed with Dick and his dad at Wembley and now lives in Grande Prairie.

Jean married Warwick Burgess of Beaverlodge. Jean and Warwick now reside in Edmonton where Warwick is an instructor in English at N.A.I.T. Jean is a Library Technician. They have three children, Steve in Grande Prairie, Jeff at Wembley and Karen at Morinville.

Dick continues to operate the family farm at Wembley that his parents pioneered.

Fred continued to live on the farm until shortly before his death in 1977.

Fred and Winnifred are interned in the Lake Saskatoon cemetery.

The Richard Reinitz Family

The year after Mom and Dad moved to Penticton, I went down to Edmonton for a visit with Dorothy and Anna. While I was there, I met June Jordbro and only a short year later, on October 19, 1974, we were married at the St. John's Lutheran Church in Wembley. Being from the "big city", June had a lot to learn about life on the farm, but as she was willing and eager to learn, it was not hard. Two years later, we were blessed with a son, Gregory Aaron and 18 months after, we became the proud parents of a baby girl, Kimberly Karla. We are still very busy farming and clearing our land.

Dad passed away in Penticton in early January of 1978 and was laid to rest at St. John's Cemetery in Wembley. Mom now lives in Farmington, B.C. with Katie.



Dick and June Reinitz, Greg, Kimmy, 1979.

The Walter Reinitz Family

How did I happen to come to the Peace River Country? I shall first have to go back to Hoosier, Saskatchewan where I grew up. Some of the young neighborhood men had left there in 1917 or 1918 for the Peace River Country. About 1922 one of these, Mr. Rassmuson, showed some potatoes and oats at one of the Hoosier Valley Agricultural seed fairs that were grown on his farm in the Peace. They were the nicest potatoes and fullest oats that I had seen, so I got a hankering to see that fabulous country.

In 1922, Russell McGibbon and Stewart Dewar returned to Hoosier and Dewar Lake, bringing with them a young cowboy, Gordon Kingsbury. He had lots of wild tales about the Peace River Country and all the opportunities there. I later found his parents in Wembley running the lumber yard. Angus Morrison was farming west of Fairview near the Dunvegan crossing, and Mr. Rassmuson northwest of Hines Creek. There was another couple of young men, who had lived closer to Marengo, Holmes Boyd and Frank Willsey. Holmes had gone to start a horse ranch near the Smoky River, but I found him farming southwest of Wembley.

In 1926, I was going to school in Edmonton: I was advised to quit, due to health, as I could not stand the confinement. In February, 1927, I went to visit the Jacob Ulmers of Stony Plain, friends of my folks. They were moving a car of settlers' effects to Wembley. That gave me an opportunity to see the country, as Ulmer wanted someone to go with the car. I readily agreed to this. I think it was the eighth of March that we left Stony Plain.

About the 13th of March, we arrived in Wembley. There was no one to meet the train, so I fed and watered the livestock and looked around to find out how I could make contact with Mr. Ulmer. I met William Hosker, who offered to drive me to Ulmer's place, as he had a team and cutter. I had supper at Ulmer's but was sent to sleep at the Jake Heikel place. I slept all night and all the next day without a let-up.

Walter Ulmer and I started to scout around for land. We went out southwest of Hinton Trail but came back. Walter was not in a very "homesteady mood". I eventually settled for the Dry Ridge and found that a lot of the Ridge was blanketed by homesteads, soldier rights, leases or owned by the Hudson Bay Co.

Late in 1926, a group of men from Stony Plain and Golden Spike who belonged to the Lutheran Church to which I also belonged, being the son of an exiled preacher of the Stony Plain congregation, bought land close together west of Wembley. By the way, my father was later exonerated and reinstated by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. These people intended to build a Lutheran church in their midst and I did not want to be too far from the church of my faith.

On the 13th of May, I went into Grande Prairie to file on the NW 13-70-9. I had hired out to Jake Heikel for a month or so with the privilege of looking more or going to file on land when the opportunity arose. I wrote my folks about the lands and the prospects of buying. They requested me to homestead by proxy if possible for my brother. The next quarter west of mine was under a 99-year lease with no leasor around, thus I filed a cancellation against it that took effect the next year. Meanwhile more poeple came in: German, Polish and others who were basically Lutheran, drawn by advertisements put out by the Lutheran church, and Val Hennig, who had bought a half section prior to this time, too.

I worked off and on for Gust Gitzel and one day he told me someone was starting work on my quarter. He loaned me his saddle pony to see what was going on. I found three German immigrants who had filed on land south of mine mistakenly taking mine and the quarter on either side of mine for theirs. I tried to explain this to them but they got rather ugly. I got my neighbor, Bob Garret to convince them. They abandoned their claims and went out to Goodfare. About one mile north of the Garrets lived a young family, the Harry Scotts, a half mile further north lived Capt. Robert Campbell, all south of the correction line. West of me lived Roland Young, a bachelor. I bunked with him for a short while 'till I got permission to stay in a cabin north of mine which was much closer, while I brushed out a building spot and a few acres of land. Homesteads were being taken up wherever they were open. Land that had been proven up with only residence requirements was being sold. Frank Dombrova and Paul Schultz, recently from Germany, filed near Capt. Campbell.

The middle of July, I left for Saskatchewan, intending to be back in time to get out logs for a shack and a barn in the new year. That was quite the trip, crossing the muskegs, the water spurted up out of the mossy places. Along Slave Lake, the track was under water for long stretches. The town of Slave Lake was in flood. Needless to say I was glad to get home.

The end of January 1928 found me loading a light car of settlers' effects to head back to the Peace Country. The day was cold and blizzardy. We had to drive 18 miles to the line that made suitable connections--Olaf Magnusen, Dewey Kootstra, my dad, my brother and I. The train left late that evening. With four horses, two colts, four cows, two calves, and a dog and cheap machinery we were on our way.

While the train was stopped in Grande Prairie, Fred Paverly came into the caboose. He asked where I was headed, and after I told him, he asked about more land. I told him of some that I knew of when I had left. He wanted a section of quarters close together. I guess he was lucky, for he settled a mile north of me.

The place where I had intended to stay was occupied, so again I made my home with the Ulmers. I kept my cattle and horses there at a straw pile on one of the Heikel quarters as the barn was empty and there was water.

The quarter that I had cancelled for my brother was now open, so I filed on it for him by proxy. In six months he had to appear. Jim MacLennan filed on the quarter cornering this and his friend, Bill MacRae filed east of Bob Garret's and put a small lumber bunk house on it. I got permission to stay there to get up my logs. With Paul Schultz we got out enough logs for a shack and a barn for me and two small sets for him; I got lumber and shingles for my shack, too. I then went to work for Jake Stegmeier for the spring, breaking in four horses while doing field work. When the crop was in, I went back to the homestead. A young man from Germany, Frank Marth, homesteaded a half mile north of Roland Young's and moved into the shack north of mine. He had a wife and two small boys. So I moved in with them 'till I got my shack up.

Philip Hennig settled north of the correction line. His son, Chris, filed on a quarter north of Roland Young. Two cousins of his, Carl and Phil filed on land south of mine. People were coming in from all over and settling on anything. By 1930, even the poorest land was homesteaded and the Depression had set in, in earnest.

My brother came up to file his claim but left again to return in the winter. That fall people were moving in across the river to file and squat. A neighbor from Saskatchewan came up and heard from Bert Osborne about the land there, so asked me to take him over with two friends of his. It ended that he and I built squatters shacks for them. In the spring I moved my buildings to a better location.

My dad had the prospect of making a deal for the Pinkhad and Tremble land, so I got out more logs. In the spring of 1928 some of us got together to form a school district, meeting at Capt. Campbell's. We had split ranks and kept needling one another, but things were kept under control and went ahead. Neil MacDougal, who had homesteaded east of me, hauled the lumber. The creek at Capt.'s had to be forded. Johnny's four-horse load unloaded itself in the creek, but the school got built half a mile north of my place. Later it was moved west. The Lutheran people got a building up for a church. One day while limbing out a log, I slipped into a spring-fed pool. I would have frozen my feet had it not been for Mr. Heikel, who shared his socks and shoes with me on the way home.

In the meantime Mr. Zeling's daughter, Adela was tired of swinging the brush scythe and working for bachelors for $5 a month as handyman, housekeeper and cook. She wanted to get married. After seeing her five times and needing just such a setup, I decided to marry her and get a package deal, plus a wife. The Lutheran people had built a church. I had helped get out the logs for that and the barn. So we went to the Lutheran Church one windy afternoon, June 18th and became the first couple of that congregation to be married there. A bushfire had swept through our section and burned up the logs, lumber and shingles that I had prepared for our house. So we went off on our honeymoon with her bundle and my cow to the little log shack in the woods that was to be our home for some time to come.



Walter and Adela Reinitz Wedding 1929.

The next spring our first son arrived. That fall I contracted to do a piece of brushing and got pneumonia out of the deal, from which I have never really recovered. When I came out of the hospital, I was very weak and had a relapse so was laid up all winter. Ulmers and Carl Eberharts took the baby to look after as Adela had to haul feed and look after the stock. A neighbor to the southeast who had moved in shortly before, had a school boy, Johnny Bauer, who helped her haul feed a couple of times, and Chris Hennig also brought a load. That was the extent of help she got with the stock and outside work. George Schadeck got us relief and delivered it personally.

We had eight children, four boys and four girls. One boy, Richard Roland, passed away at three months with crib disease. Another boy, Ernest Henry, passed away after he was married while working for a contractor for the Forestry. Three men, one our son, were asphyxiated on the Goodwin road one bitterly cold and stormy New Year's. Herman, the eldest, with a family lives at Dawson



Reinitz Family 1945. Ernie, Adela, Walter, Herman; Front: Anna, Dick, and Kate. Later came Dorothy and Carol.

Creek. Dick is married and lives at Wembley. Katie married Cole and lives at Farmington, B.C. Anna married Skillen and lives at Fort Saskatchewan. Dorothy married Pikula and lives at Josephburg, Alberta and the baby of the family, Carol married MacAlister and lives in Wembley.

Homesteading was hard financially and labor wise, but we had fun, community picnics, Christmas programs, community dances and even a few stampedes. We always seemed to find time to visit one another going berry picking together and such. I eventually had to move to a warmer, drier climate due to poor health, and doctor's orders, so we now reside in Penticton, B.C.

Conrad Rubie

Conrad Rubie arrived in the Peace country early in 1937. He travelled by train, leaving his folks behind in Stony Plain, although they too eventually moved to Wembley. It was in Stony Plain where he met Ernest Breitkreutz Sr., who expounded on the attributes and advantages of the Peace country.

So, it was the expectation of better wages and more available jobs that brought Conrad to Wembley. The hospitality at the Ernest Breitkreutz Sr. home provided him with his first two weeks of lodging while he looked for work. His first job here, which started on March 1, 1937, was hauling and splitting firewood for Soren Frederickson at Dimsdale. The promise was true, wages were a great deal better — $35 per month, plus a bonus in the fall; compared to $20 per month in Stony Plain.



Conrad and Pauline Rubie.

The coming of World War II brought change into many lives including Conrad's. He moved to Saskatchewan to work on his uncle's farm, this time leaving behind his fiancee, Pauline Kuntz. Pauline remembers there were about nine couples in the local area who were married the fall that war broke out. Conrad and Pauline were one of them, even though Pauline went all the way to Duval, Saskatchewan, for her wedding. They managed a three-day honeymoon in Regina and then it was back to the farm where they were kept very busy, except for the occasional visit to town, which, once a month included a special stop at the Post Office for Conrad, where he had to register as an enemy alien, because of his Russian descent, even though he had become a Canadian citizen in 1937. However, when Russia joined forces with England, this procedure was cancelled.

After working for his uncle for two years, Conrad decided to set up farming on his own. The best place to do that was the Peace country, so back to Wembley they came, this time with a new baby (Esther Ruth). They purchased the then commonly known "White Place" two and a half miles southwest of Wembley, from Peter



Conrad Rubie and children: Esther, Conrad and Helen. Robert in front.

Unterschultz, and moved into an old log house, which years before had been somewhat of a mansion with hardwood floors and stained glass windows, apparently constructed by a Mr. H. Patterson. They started farming with a cow, a couple of pigs, and 15 chickens.

Pauline's memories of those first few years are mainly of hard times and some hard winters. She recalls the winter of 1943, when it got down to 60 below zero fahrenheit. That was one of two winters that Conrad worked on the Gordon Moore sawmill cutting lumber, for the Peace bridge between Dawson Creek and Fort St. John. Conrad continued to work on sawmills as a sawyer and then as a millwright for a total of 28 winters. Those were long lonely winters for Pauline and their growing family, although she was thankful to have her family and friends all around her.

Pauline had come to Wembley in 1929, from Poland, with her parents Karol and Rose Kuntz. She attended Aspen Ridge School for two years where her teachers were a Miss Broadbridge and a Miss Howell. She then attended St. John's Lutheran school where her teachers were Mr. Marvin Mundt and Pastor Wildgrube. Pauline left school and went out to work early in life. It was while she was working for Dempseys in 1938 that she met Conrad.

Conrad and Pauline lived at the old "White Place" for five years, and then moved to the "Hanley Place", their present location about five miles west of there. They had three more children, Helen, Robert, and Joan. All four children married and Conrad and Pauline became the proud grandparents of a total of ten grandchildren.

The Marion Sanders Family

by Mrs. Sanders

After years of poor crops in Saskatchewan, with hail, too dry and such, I wrote to a Mr. Gabler across the river south of Grande Prairie, having read in the Free Press Prairie Farmer of good land and such there.

In October, 1929, after harvest, we left Buffalo Gap, Saskatchewan. We went through many towns, including Edmonton, Calgary, and north through Slave Lake. The roads were very muddy, and one night our Chev six-cylinder car was stuck tight in the mud. Fords and such got through, but we waited until morning when some other travellers helped us get unstuck. That was one muddy place! We put spruce boughs under the wheels and with a man steering the car, and two women in front with a pole pulling, we finally got out. The people who helped us were French, I think. After that, we crossed the Peace River at Dunvegan on the ferry.

When we got to Grande Prairie, the Wapiti River was too high to cross, so we went back to Grande Prairie, where we were told of nice land at Fort St. John. We drove there, to find just old buildings. At the store we were shown samples of the grain and vegetables grown — they were poor, and we told them we had better in Saskatchewan. They told us we had better go back to Grande Prairie, so after buying a tin heater and setting it up in the vehicle, we returned to Grande Prairie. On our return to Grande Prairie, we were told of land across the Wapiti River from Wembley. We drove to south of Wembley, and camped in Osborne's yard, and Mr. Osborne took Mr. Sanders across the river by boat. He didn't like the land there, either.

We were about to leave, when Mr. Osborne told us of land west of them, so we looked at it and then went to Grande Prairie and filed on the fraction of land there. We bought lumber, made a boat and took the lumber upriver to make a shack. That first shack was 12' by 14' with a sloped roof and tar paper. We had an old box tin stove for heat and cooking. When we moved in November, George was six years old and Elmer was five. That winter, we got logs out to build a house in the spring of 1930. Although we didn't have much money, we got vegetables from Osbornes and had wild meat.

The first work Mr. Sanders had was for Mr. Watts at Pipestone Creek, carpenter work for which he was paid 15 cents an hour. He trapped in the area for a few winters, too.

We cleared land, and built a log and pole house before we went back to Saskatchewan, where Mr. Sanders worked in harvest. When harvest was over, we shipped back by boxcar a team of horses, chickens, a cow and calf, machinery and household things. We drove back, and moved to the farm. It was tough going, with not much money.

I put in a big garden, and sold vegetables, onions and all. I think it was in the spring of 1935, when the ice broke on the river, it piled high across from us. We slept on the sidehill until the water dropped. Then in July we again had a big flood and slept on the sidehill, as the whole flat was covered with water. Afterwards, our crop and garden were all covered with river silt. We had to shovel mud out of the house before we could move back in. The next year, we built a lumber house above the flat, and moved in.

That March, Mr. Sanders broke his ankle and I took him by cutter and team to Wembley to the doctor, then a snowmobile came to Wembley and took him to the hospital in Grande Prairie. He was in hospital for several days and then laid up at home for several months.

That September, the boys started to school at Aspen Dale. They each had a pony they rode to school, but in November, George fell off his horse and broke his wrist. Mr. and Mrs. Sieker took him to Wembley and then into Grande Prairie to the hospital. That was the end of school for that year for the boys. We got lessons for them from Edmonton, and I did my best to teach them, but I don't know if I helped or not. We had no money to pay the doctor bills, so Mr. Sanders did road work to pay for his and George's bills. When Aspen Ridge School opened, the boys went to school there. The teacher was Harry Sherk. He still keeps in touch with Elmer in Edmonton. He was well liked.



Elmer Sanders at school.

In the fall of 1941, George left for Edmonton to join the Air Force. In 1942, we bought land in Wembley and built a house there. In October, we moved in so Elmer could go to school. That fall, Mr. Sanders went to Dawson Creek to work on Harry Johnson's Lunch Counter.

In the fall of 1943, Elmer went to Edmonton to join the Air Force. In the fall of 1948, we moved to Pitt Meadows, B.C., where we stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bissett until we bought a home on November 13, 1948. We returned to Wembley in the fall of 1949, to sell our house there to Mr. Mitchell who owned the store. Mr. Coe bought the land. After we had our sale there, we came back home to Pitt Meadows. On May 2, 1975, Mr. Sanders passed away at the age of 84 years, after being ill for some time. I live alone here now, and the only wild berries here are blackberries, and they just go to waste. There are big fields of tame blueberries and cranberries; they are picked by machines and sent to many places.

The Paul Schultz Family

by Carol Schaefer

It was in the spring of 1929, when a widowed father, Emil Stierle, and his family sailed on the Estonia for Canada. Leaving their homeland and loved ones behind they decided to make a new life, hoping someday to send for others left behind in Germany. Arriving in Halifax on May 12 they went on by rail, stopping at Winnipeg considering a possible place to settle, but after a few days decided to go on to Edmonton. Emil's family who came with him were, Amanda, Edmund and his wife Frieda, Olga, Albert and Lydia. Lydia was 15 years old then, and found a job doing housework at Miskie's in Stony Plain. Olga also stayed on in Edmonton finding housework. The rest journeyed on to Wembley and settled on a homestead. There they renewed friendships with others from Germany.

In the fall Lydia took the train to Wembley and found work at Sexsmith.

Paul Schultz, a young man of 21 decided he wanted adventure and to live in the land of opportunity - Canada. In 1921, he accepted a passport fare to Canada in exchange for work. This fare was provided by Breitkreutz's, and so Paul worked for them in Stony Plain, until they moved on to Wembley. He worked long hard years clearing land, chopping down trees, burning brush and picking roots, for Breitkreutz's, until they felt the passport fare was earned. He decided to buy a homestead of his own, and in 1929 started clearing his own land. Each dawn he would rise when the sun started to peep over the hills and with a packsack over his back and his "faithful axe" he would fell the trees with vigorous determination. Soon he was able to purchase a team of horses and plow, breaking the first ten acres required by the government the first year. There were only trails for roads, however, as settlers started to start up homesteads the need for roads was evident. The government hired men to build the roads and so Paul managed to work on the roads and earn some money.

One day Paul was invited to Lang's, neighbors of the Stierle family and found a fellowship which helped ease the heartache of having left his parents and sisters in the Old Country. Paul became attracted to Lydia, a pretty brunette, and was impressed with her quiet manner and ambitious disposition. Lydia would bustle about cleaning and tidying. For a young woman, whose mother died at an early age, this was impressive to a young man looking for a good wife. It soon developed into a romance and in the fall of 1929 they applied for a permit of marriage. Paul had by this time been able to build a log house and a barn, and this met the expectations of Lydia's father. Their courtship was restricted to a Sunday when Paul would come over and stay for supper. They planned their wedding for next April, and through her sister, Olga, was able to get a white wedding dress and shoes. But, alas, when the shoes arrived, just shortly before the wedding, they were a bit small and pinched her feet. Paul was a shoemaker and barber by trade, having learned these trades in Germany. He skillfully stretched the shoes, and Lydia was able to wear them. The wedding took place on April 21, 1930 and was performed by Rev. Wildgrube. The reception was at Lang's and many friends came to celebrate. There was plenty of food, some wine, and Paul was able to buy a keg of beer. Paul also played the accordion, and for the most part provided the music for his own wedding dance.



Paul and Lydia Schultz on their Wedding Day, April 21, 1930.

A baby girl came to bless Paul and Lydia on March 29, 1931. A hospital was too far away, and Paul drove over the rough trails with wagon and horses to get Dr. Carlisle from Wembley. When he returned, Dr. Carlisle had a sideache from the rough ride, and jokingly remarked to Lydia, "I guess I'm going to have a baby, too!" Elsie was a healthy ten pound baby girl. The neighbors came over and helped Lydia while she regained her strength.

On April 28, 1933, another little girl, weighing eight pounds came to bless their wee home. They named her Karolina - "Carrie" for short, after Lydia's mother. It kept Lydia busy caring for two little girls. She had to carry water with pails from the dam that Paul dug with the neighbors. This water was used for washing only and had to be strained.

Paul would work out for one dollar a day, clearing land. He was known for his sincere and ambitious nature, competing often for the most trees felled. He, like other pioneers would come home evenings, and work on his own land chopping trees and burning brush. Many times, Lydia was at his side, their goal to get enough land cleared for seeding by spring time. He would rise at six a.m., and on cold frosty mornings, wrap cloth and gunnysack around his feet to keep them warm.

Two years later, they were blessed on April 27, 1935 with an eight pound baby boy, an event they were looking forward to. They named him Robert, after Lydia's brother whom she lost in the war.

At this time, they were acquainted with many of their neighbors, and Dan and Martha Paul who lived across

the road were no exception. Martha and Lydia often shared their problems and helped one another. One of Lydia's enjoyments was to visit Martha, and at these times they would both listen to their favorite radio programs. Some evenings Lydia would walk over after supper, leaving Paul with the children to listen to her special program. One evening in particular, when she was about to come home, Paul draped a white bed sheet around himself, and went out to meet her. It was pitch dark, but to Lydia, this white moving "object" was quite visible! Having just heard a scary story on the radio, her imagination grew! She started backing up, but "it" caught her by the legs. However, Paul gave up when he realized she was near a state of collapse. It was some time before she resumed her visits at night. Paul enjoyed teasing and a practical joke was fun!

Eventually they got their own radio, and it was Paul's turn to get engrossed in some of the stories. One of his favorites was "Gang Busters" and "Old-fashioned Hoedown with Cousin Minnie Pearl" on Saturday nights. This was a relaxing time, as the children would have their evening bath, and Lydia would polish shoes and mend clothes in readiness for church service the next day.

Paul would often cut hair for the neighbors, and many Sunday mornings their good neighbor Fred Paverly came over to chat and have a haircut. They were able to help one another with many things.

Many a summer day, they would drive in their democrat to visit Amanda (Lydia's sister) and husband Frank Nagel. Both families would go down to the Red Willow River where they would catch fish (mostly suckers). They would return and clean fish all day. It was a change of diet from the pork and beef.

On cold wintry evenings, and especially during the Christmas season, they would strip the beds of the feather ticks and toss them into the sleigh bedded down with hay. The children would be bundled up, and away they would drive to visit relatives, Nagel's or Stierle's. The hours would fly by quickly as they spent the evenings feasting and chatting or singing carols. They would come home in the wee hours of the morning, Paul clapping his hands to keep them warm. The horses would be bedded down and fed while they were visiting so everybody was comfortable.

When "Carrie" was ten years old, Lydia was expecting another child. She was counting on having this baby in the hospital. One day, she knew the time was near, so Paul went to get Mrs. Garrett, one of the neighbors to take Lydia to the hospital in her car. Mrs. Garrett was a widow, and didn't particularly like other women. She kept many dogs, and they would accompany her in the Coupe car she drove, and each dog wore a bonnet. That day she only brought one dog with her. They weren't too far down the road, and Lydia knew she couldn't ride any further, or the baby would be born in the car. Mrs. Garrett, not wanting this to happen drove back to the farm as quickly as she dared. The neighbors were called in as midwives, and Lydia gave birth to a lovely baby girl on March 6, 1943. They named her Edna. Elsie and Carrie were invited to see their new sister, only minutes after she was born. Bobby also looked at the new addition to their family in wonder. Their proud father, instructed the oldest to give Edna her first bath. Elsie backed out "I couldn't begin to hold her, I might drop her!" Carrie had no choice - as she saw the stern look her father had. Carrie immediately became her personal "baby-sitter" as well. Toys and dolls were a scarcity, and Carrie owned one doll which she received only a year before when she had her appendix removed. But this "doll" baby was real! What fun she was going to have! Little did she know she also had to wash the diapers....

Elsie loved to ride the horses, and would frequently get the cows from the pasture on a horse named "Queen". "Queen" was an unusual horse, as she had injured her back as a colt, and had a back like a camel, or a built-in saddle. One day, Elsie trotted into the yard riding "Queen", "Queen" was startled by the geese. She stopped suddenly and Elsie fell off. When she got up she realized she broke her arm. She was taken to the doctor, and wore a cast for a long time. No longer were the children given freedom to ride the horses.

Many pails of water were carried from the dam at the edge of the field to heat up on the stove for the weekly washing. As the girls grew older they were able to help carry this water. It was truly a blessing when Fred Paverly came and drilled a well. The well was deep, but it provided good tasting soft water, and everyone was thrilled. Elsie and Carrie pumped water by hand for the house and for feeding the pigs and chickens. Washing clothes was a big chore and usually took the whole day. The wooden washer had to be rocked back and forth rubbing the clothes until they were clean.

The children attended school at Aspen Ridge, walking one and a half miles each way. In the winter time, the snow was deep, and Elsie would tie her jacket belt to Carrie's and break the trails in knee deep snow. They each took turns being janitor for the school, and would leave earlier to light the fire and sweep the floor. Janitor wages were six dollars a month.

On January 3, 1947, Hilda was born, weighing around eight pounds. This time Lydia managed to plan a little vacation in Grande Prairie, staying with Paul's mother until her confinement. Paul's folks had sold their farm that year to Paul and Lydia and their house was moved and attached to the two-room log house. This gave extra room for the additional family. In 1948, Lydia's father, Emil Stierle passed away, after a brief illness.

During 1949, Paul was thrilled to have his very own first tractor, a Massey Ferguson. His children were growing up and he was getting some help with the field work. Now he could get his work done much faster with power machinery.

Once a year, Lydia would make large vats of soap, and this was adequate for all the washing.

Firewood had to be made ahead of time to allow drying, and generally the neighbors got together and cut the wood in small pieces to fit the stoves. The children then would have to pile the wood neatly in large piles in the yard. One day in 1948, Paul was out felling trees with Bobby, and was so intent on felling his tree, he didn't notice one falling towards him, He ran, but was unavoidably hit. Lydia and daughter Carrie were busy rendering lard, when they came home. Bobby ran to the neighbors for help to get him to the doctor. There were no serious complications and Paul was back working soon after.

Two years later on July 18, another baby boy blessed their home, and again Lydia was able to take a little vacation this time staying with a niece, Mary Elford and her husband, Russell. Henry weighed in at 11 pounds and was bigger than most of the babies who left the hospital. Carrie was managing the home front, cooking, baking bread, and looking after the children. Elsie had by this time been working out in Grande Prairie, and then B.C.,

but came home for a couple of weeks that summer to help out.

Paul still continued to keep up barbering for friends and family and the odd time repaired shoes. Many an evening he would play the accordion and sing his favorite folk songs. Edna, Hilda, and Henry sang together, and when Bob came out from the city he accompanied them with his piano accordion.

In 1953 they took their first trip away from home and travelled to Banff in their new car.

A phone was also installed and this became a convenience and a blessing.

The children were bussed into Wembley school, and this gave many new opportunities for the children. Edna won the queen contest one year when she was 16, and also sang at various functions, e.g. graduation exercises and talent nights.



Front: Edna, Lydia Schultz, Henry, Paul Schultz, and Hilda.
Back: Carrie, Bob and Elsie.

The 1960's were exciting in some ways, as that's when the children started to announce their plans for weddings. First, Carrie, then Edna, Bob and Hilda.

Paul and Lydia's health started failing about that time, and things came to a critical stage when in the fall of 1969, Paul collapsed and spent weeks in the hospital. Lydia had been having a series of gall bladder attacks for months and the doctor decided to operate on December 29, 1968. She passed away on January 1, 1969, not having the strength to fight anymore. Paul spent the next two winters with daughter Carrie and husband at Oyen, but his health was also on the decline. In July, 1970 an auction sale was called and the farm rented out. Paul was hospitalized from June until his passing December 1, 1970. He had a malignant brain tumor.

Paul and Lydia were staunch pioneers and were willing to share or help their neighbors whenever possible.

Elsie is living in Toronto, Carrie (or Carol) and Walt Schaefer and three children at Spruce Grove; Bob and one daughter at Edmonton, Edna and Glenn Hunter and two children at Grande Prairie, Hilda and Don Murray and two children at Fairview, and Henry at Grande Prairie.

The Hans Sieker Family

by Doreen Sieker

Hans was born in Stony Plain, October, 1927, the first in the family of Louise and Henry Sieker. The family moved to Wembley in the late 1920's and lived west of St. John's Lutheran Church. The following summer they moved to NW 24-70-9-W6. This is where Hans grew up and still resides.

Over the years he worked on threshing crews, starting at fourteen years of age. Later he worked in the bush, in sawmills and falling trees.

In 1951, Hans and I were married. I am the youngest daughter of Sam and Elizabeth Skillen. We moved into a little house on the Sieker farm. Hans continued to work out and help on the farm.

Mother and Dad Sieker purchased the old Garret farm and moved there in January, 1956. We moved into the original farm house. By this time we had three children and a large house was a real luxury after our tiny home. We took over the home farm at this time.

Three more children were born to us, making a family of six. Four of the children are married at this time.

Esther married Albert Stierle, and they have two girls and one boy and live in Grande Prairie.

Lorraine married Brian Dziwenko, and they have three girls.

Herman is still single. Douglas is married to Belinda Shier. Lynette married Don McKie and they have one daughter. Joyce, the youngest, is still at home and in grade 12.

The Henry Sieker Family

In May 1926, Henry Sieker came to Canada from Germany arriving by boat and landing in Quebec. In this same month, he travelled by train to Edmonton. He then moved to Stony Plain where he lived and worked for farmers.

While in Stony Plain, he married Louise Schurmann who had also arrived in Canada from Germany in May, 1926. In 1929, travelling by train, Henry and Louise moved from Stony Plain and settled in the Wembley area.

They spent their first year in a home near Huallen at which time Henry did brushing for farmers. Upon arriving in the Wembley area, Henry and Louise attended St. John's Lutheran Church with Reverend Wildegrube as pastor at that time.

In 1930, Henry and Louise moved to the Aspen Ridge district to farm and live after purchasing a quarter of land. Then in 1954, they moved to the Garrett farm that they purchased and Henry still resides on this farm.

In July, 1974, Louise passed away and is laid to rest in St. John's Lutheran Church cemetery.

Henry and Louise raised a family of six children. Hans is married to Doreen Skillen and lives on the original quarter. They have a family of six children. Lore is married to Sigmunt Stefan who farms at Wembley and they have a family of five. Trude is married to Fred Kopp who farms at Wembley and they have a family of four. Rudy is married to Ruth Dombrova and with their family of three they farm with Henry. Robert is married to Dorothy Nagel and with their family of three they reside in Grande Prairie. Erwin is married to Diane Johns and lives in Edmonton with a family of two.

The Rudy Sieker Family

Rudy was born at Wembley and attended school at Aspen Ridge. Later he worked at Sohm and Eckstrom's sawmill in the winters and farmed during the summer.

Rudy married Ruth Dombrova on October 21, 1967 at St. John's Lutheran Church at Wembley.

Ruth was raised at Wembley and attended Aspen Ridge school for grades one and two before being bussed to Wembley to complete her schooling.

Rudy owns a mixed farming operation and farms with his father. Rudy and Ruth have a family of three children; Steven, Shayne, and Shellene.

Albert and Georgina Smith

Dad, Albert Smith, was born in Pickering, Ontario in 1871. He spent his boyhood years there, coming west as a young man to southern Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Mother, Georgina Kerr, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1876, coming to Canada when she was 20 years of age.

She didn't care for Canada. She felt that Scotland was the only place for her, but it took two years to earn enough money to pay her passage home again. Upon arriving back in Scotland, she realized what a beautiful country Canada really was, but it took another two years to earn enough to get back on this side of the water again. Her final arrival was in 1900. Mother never had a desire to go back to Scotland again. Mother worked for different families over the years doing household duties until she met and married Dad in Carivale, Saskatchewan.

They made their first home at Nesbitt, Manitoba, and had three children, two daughters and one son; Agnes, Dick, and Alice. When their family were quite small, they moved to the Lily School district at Souris, Manitoba, farming there for several years.



Seated: Alice and Dick. Standing: ? ?, Agnes.

In 1922, Uncle Jim Smith took a scouting trip up into the Peace River country to see what it was like and it proved to his liking. Two years later, Mother, Dad, and Uncle Jim (remaining and making his home with us from then on), loaded what few things we had left in a railroad box car, including one pony and feed and a few household articles. Dad rode with the box car because the pony needed feeding and watering, as a trip by railroad in those days took a long time, especially the freight trains. He didn't care for the battling with the arrangements for accomodations and all that goes with it, while Uncle Jim was good at that sort of thing.

We arrived in Grande Prairie on April Fool's day, 1924. All the money the folks had between them was $200 which Mother kept inside the top of her stocking. We stayed in the Donald Hotel for two days until the freight train finally arrived. Then Dad and Uncle Jim found a house facing west on Bear Creek, across from the ski jump, for rent. We moved in there for two weeks until we could find some land to rent.

Dad and Uncle Jim met a Mr. Oscar Kenney who drove them out in his open car to show them the land that he had just vacated. They decided to rent it for three years, dealing with the Soldiers Settlement Board for it. It was two and one half miles south west of the site that was to become Wembley later. It is now owned by Stephen Burgess of Grande Prairie. The folks got all their belongings off the railroad car and moved out. Mr. Kenney came and got Mother and us three children in his open car and took us out. Was it ever a cold ride! Dick had the measles at the time so Mother had a time getting him well wrapped up so he wouldn't have a set back. It took Dad a long time before he could accept this country. He felt it was far too far away from a market, which made freight charges so high, causing everything we had to buy so much more expensive.

Not long after arriving at our new home, Finlay Watson, a neighbor and a good one, (in fact everyone was a good neighbor!) asked the folks if they would like to look after his two cows and heifer calf for the summer in exchange for all the milk and cream they gave. Well, that was really welcome as we had no milk or butter up to that time. When the cows went home he gave the folks the heifer calf, which was the beginning of our cow herd. Billy Bruce had us look after a cow and calf for him also. It really gave us a good lift. The folks bought another pony to match the one we brought with us. Uncle Jim and I drove to Grande Prairie every week and sold butter at the Donald hotel and cafe. That money paid for our few groceries. In the fall of that year, Finlay Watson got Dick to come and pick up his potatoes for him and gave him a dollar for it. I think Dick ran all the way home waving his dollar, he was so excited. Mr. and Mrs. Jack Bullas happened to come over for a visit that night. When they heard of Dick and his dollar, Jack told him he would sell him a new born calf for it. Dick took him up on that deal and gave him the dollar. The folks went over and collected the calf the next day. He ended up getting $175 when he sold it three years later.

That first year the folks were able to collect up an outfit of horses and put in an oat crop. The Soldiers Settlement Board also bargained with Dad to do 40 acres of breaking in exchange for all the first crop, which Dad agreed to do. In those days we didn't work on Sundays, (where we had come from no one worked on a Sunday), so that Sunday we all went picking raspberries with the idea Dad would cut his oat crop Monday. When we got up Monday morning, everything was flat, covered with a heavy blanket of snow. The neighbors told him a farmer just has to work up in this country on a Sunday as the seasons are usually too short at their longest. So from there on every good day was taken advantage of. What part of the crop that could be salvaged was cut and stooked. In those days it was hard to get a threshing machine when you needed it; you just had to wait your turn. So Dad and Uncle Jim stacked it close to the creek bank and it was threshed in late November.

The following year they planted the 40 acres of new breaking to wheat and it was a lovely crop. Just before harvest time a hail storm went through and wiped that crop out. That year Wembley had started to build up.



Albert and Georgina Smith, July 1941.

That winter, Dad and Uncle Jim took old sacks and cut them into long strips and wound them around their legs like puttees only well up over their knees as the snow was terribly deep that year. They spent all one day getting a load of wood out of the bush. The next day Uncle Jim would take it to Wembley and sell it for one dollar. Two days hard work to get one dollar. Sure changed days, isn't it?

I don't remember where Dad got his first few hens, but he set the eggs and raised his own chickens. That first summer the place seemed to be overrun with skunks. One of the hens was in a coop not too far from the bedroom window. Mother heard her making a noise. She looked out and sure enough there was a skunk trying to get into the coop. Dad jumped out of bed and went out and shot it. Well you can imagine the smell in the house as the window happened to be open. He had a trap set at a gate going into a closure at the other side of the house where he had more hens with chickens and caught one there. He ended up getting five or six of them before he was finished.

After staying on that rented farm for three years, the folks bought a quarter section south of the correction line NW 32-70-8-W6 from a bachelor by the name of Art Sherman. He was a fire ranger and used pack horses as transportation. There was only 25 acres broke on the quarter which made lots of work for Dad and Uncle Jim as the trees were really thick and had to be chopped down with the axe and the land was broke using horses. As the years went on they bought the quarter south of us as well as the one west, and Dad homesteaded SE 32-70-8-W6. The Pipestone Creek ran through it, and this was for his pasture.

Alice went for one year to the first Aspen Ridge school. Then we all went to Wembley. Uncle Jim would drive us three miles with team and buggy or sleigh, depending on the season, to catch the same kind of transportation which we called the school bus. This went on for a year or two until we were all able to handle horses ourselves, then we rode horseback in the summer and drove in an old homemade covered cutter in the winter.

Dad and Uncle Jim decided to get some lumber. They took two teams of horses and sleighs and drove away up in the Valhalla district to a saw mill and hauled enough lumber to build a house in Wembley which they built themselves. Each winter Mother would move to town with us children, so we would be close to school. Then it would be back to the farm again in spring and horseback riding again. In those days it seemed as if I (Agnes) practically lived on a horse. It was up at four thirty and down to the pasture and bring up all the horses in time so they could be fed and brushed down and harnessed before breakfast. Then prepare for school, and away all three of us would go with a horse apiece. When we got home it was back to the pasture for the milk cows. But it sure didn't hurt me any. In those days the young people didn't have time to get into trouble.

When Dick was 18, he went to Calgary to Technical School and took aeronautics. He had taken a year or two by correspondence before that. After graduating, he had been a flight engineer first with Canadian Pacific Airlines, then later on with Wardair. The last few years its been office work at the Vancouver airport.

Alice took one and a half years in the University Nurses training school in Edmonton. She spent the next two years on the nursing staff in the Grande Prairie Hospital, then three years nursing at a nursing home in Vancouver, returning home to get married.

Dad passed away in 1948 at the age of 76 years, seven months, just two weeks before they were going to retire from the farm. Mother and Uncle Jim married later and lived in the house in Wembley. Three years later they had their house moved to Grande Prairie and lived in it there. It still stands on Richmond Avenue and 98th Street, but I don't imagine for much longer as the business section is spreading rapidly that way. Mother passed away in January 1964 at the age of 87 years, ten months. Uncle Jim passed away on October 19 just ten days after his 95 birthday.

Agnes married Peter Taylor, eldest son of Mrs. Taylor and the late Mr. Henry Taylor of Wembley. They have two sons.

Dick married Mildred Larkin, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Larkin of Victoria and they have no family.

Alice married Albert Hill, eldest son of Mrs. Hill and the late Albert Hill of Rio Grande. They have three sons and one daughter.



Uncle Jim Smith.

The Peter Taylor Family

by Agnes Taylor

Peter came from Sterlingshire, Scotland with his parents and family, arriving at Wembley in June, 1928. The soldiers Settlement Board brought a number of families out, of which they were one. They settled on S½ 8-71-8-W6 just two and a half miles southwest of Wembley and had the Frank Johns and Geordie Farquhar families as their neighbors. They were also Soldier Settlement Board settlers. Peter worked for Mr. Fred Paverly his first summer here. His second year was spent, along with two of his brothers and his dad, clearing a quarter section of land for J.O. Stewart. They took their lunch and walked two miles across country every morning and night until the job was completed, all for the huge sum of $500. Young people nowadays don't really know what it's like to earn a dollar the hard way. Later on they purchased the Fred and Gordon Barber land SE 5-71-8-W6 and SW 4-71-8-W6 and had a lot of that to clear.

This Barber land became our first home after Peter and I, Agnes Smith, eldest daughter of Albert and Georgina Smith, were married by the Reverend Charles Kitney in the United Church in Grande Prairie, April 6, 1943. And what muddy roads we had to travel over to get there! We really appreciate the paved and gravel roads we have now.



Peter & Agnes Taylor with Rev. Kitney on our Wedding Day. 1943.

Our first home was bought from Mrs. James Rickerby in Wembley and skidded out on the snow with the Allis Chalmers tractor, placing it on the northwest corner of the Fred Barber quarter. This tractor along with a separator had been bought earlier from Finlay Watson.

Our honeymoon was spent cleaning house and with the help of Charlie Silverthorne digging a basement under it.

In our first years the field work was all done with horses, which seemed so slow when you could hear the neighbor's tractor going all hours. But any breaking of land we did was done with the Allis Chalmers tractor. Our first son Bryan was born in March, 1944. Truly a little bundle of joy.

We lived here and farmed until the spring of 1948, when we bought my (Agnes) parent's farm just south of us. Dad, Mother and Uncle Jim were going to retire that spring and move into Wembley, but just two weeks before leaving the farm Dad passed away. So he never had a chance of town life which I'm quite sure he wasn't looking forward to anyway. We moved down here the latter half of April. That spring we drove to Wembley on April 30 with the team of horses and sleigh. That had been a really late spring. As we had bought the machinery along with the land, we were able to do our field work with a tractor from this time on. That fall, in November, our second son, Leigh, was born. Another little bundle of joy.

I helped Peter as much as possible especially at haying time and driving the tractor on the binder. The first couple of years after Leigh was born, I would bundle him up and he would ride on my knee. We would put two or three pillows on the brakes of the tractor along with a cover and that was where Bryan rode playing with a toy or sleeping. When the baby was three years old, we left them playing in and out of the truck at the end of the field. By this time we had bought our first new half ton truck, a 1951 G.M.C.

We are members of the Wembley United Church and I have taken an active part in all of its different groups, as well as being the secretary-treasurer of the Klondike Trail Mutual Telephone Company for 15 years until its demise in 1972.

Our eldest son Bryan is a mechanic and works in Grande Prairie. He married Edith Brent, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Brent of Wembley. They have one daughter, Kari. They live on the farm and have their home in the same yard as ours. Leigh married Darlene Davis of Ft. Nelson, B.C. and formerly of Vancouver, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Isaacson. They live in Ft. Nelson. Leigh operates the Ft. Nelson Imperial Esso Station. They have two boys, Chad and Matthew.



Rev. White, Leigh Taylor, Bryan Taylor, & cousin Craig Taylor entering the church on Leigh's wedding day, 1975.

Peter and I have slowed down considerably but we are still able to enjoy farm life, with Bryan's help. Over the years the more modern conveniences have come gradually. First the telephone in 1954, then the electricity in 1959 or 1960. Then in 1979 we have the convenience of the gas for heating. What more can anyone wish for, along with the clean and quiet living of country life.

Henry Thomsen

Henry Thomsen came from Germany to Edmonton in March 1928. He then went on to Mannville, Alberta. He stayed here for one year, and during this time, he married Emma Bauer. They then moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta, working at farm work.

In 1931 they decided to come to the Peace River country and give it a try. His first work was for Cap Campbell for $5 per month for approximately eight months. and this wasn't for cash, it had to be taken out in other ways, produce etc. Out of this marriage were born two sons and two daughters, John and Edward, Lydia and Emily. Johnny was killed in a mill accident across the Wapiti in 1951. Emma died in 1937.

Henry worked for different farmers in the district for a few years, moving to the Gass quarter which he had rented, then buying and moving to the Richardson quarter on the banks of the Wapiti River SE 17-70-8-W6 around 1952 or 1953. He married Ivy Sloat of Westmark, Alberta, in 1942. There were seven girls and two boys from this marriage; Marion, Theodore, Evelyn, Louise, Betty, Geraldine, John, Shirley, and Donna. They lived in the old Dick Richardson house until Henry bought the Aspen Ridge school about 20 years ago and moved it down and made it into their present comfortable home. The Thomsen's have 22 grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

The Tom Wardill Family

by Carol Thomson

As a small child of about three, Lydia Thomsen (born November 15, 1929) vaguely remembers the trip from her birth place, Medicine Hat, with her parents Henry and Emma (nee Bauer) to the Wembley district.

Life wasn't very easy for them at first as it was the beginning of the hungry thirties. They lived in a one room house with a board floor and sod roof. It rained inside for two or three days after a rain storm. When Lydia started school in Aspen Dale, she had only one dress to wear. It was white with blue flowers. In summer she walked to school. During one of these walks, she lost her rubber boot in the muskeg. There were no cement sidewalks in those times. Her mother, Emma, drove her to school in the sleigh in the winter.

In the meantime the family was growing. Emmaline Katherine born June 25, 1932; John Henry born May 16, 1933; and Edward born June 8, 1936.

Tragedy struck the family on April 21, 1937. Emma died after an operation. The children were taken in by thoughtful neighbours. Lydia and Emily stayed with the Ernest Breitkreutz Sr. family. Mrs. Breikreutz really had a houseful, with ten of her own children and two extra. John stayed at Val Meyer Sr.'s home and Edward at John Meyer Sr.'s. What neighbours!

After approximately two years had passed the children returned home. Imagine three kids ages ten, seven and six looking after themselves. Henry was farming and working for other farmers.

Lydia recalls many meals of their favorite food, raw potatoes. They, as most kids, were always leaving the door open. One day the pig ran in and fell through the open cellar door, the kids had been getting potatoes. What a commotion. Three kids screaming, crying and trying to catch and lift a squealing pig out of the cellar. To further add to the scene, in runs the dog and jumps into the cellar, too. Needless to say, the pig was still there when Henry got home from work.

Christmas was a special time, especially the year after Emma died. The Ladies' Aid Society from St. John's Lutheran Church brought cakes, pies, and cookies. Lydia says they sure ate good for some time.

Later Ivy Sloat answered an ad and came to housekeep for the family. She stayed and married Henry on June 14, 1942. About this time, Lydia got her first eye glasses. They had new lenses put in Aunt Annie Stoll's old frames.

Lydia's schooling was at Aspen Ridge, Aspen Dale and St. John's schools. She attended until grade eight.

When she was eighteen, she went to work as a waitress at the Royal Cafe in Grande Prairie. It was here that she met the love of her life, Tom Wardill. They were married on October 21, 1948. That winter and others following, they lived in bush camps where Tom worked for Hystads, Binks, and Hanson and Reynolds. During the summer they lived in Grande Prairie. They had four children, all born in Grande Prairie. Carol Ann was born in 1950; Joan, born 1952; Iris Diane, born 1954; and Raymond Thomas Henry, born 1956.

In 1960, Tom and Lydia bought the old Sask farm, east of Aspen Ridge School. A new house was built and the old lot house was remodelled into a cow barn. Other improvements were made too. The children recall many happy times playing, "One Pink Porpoise Jumped Into The Pool", by sliding down a mud slide into the dugout. They also went on numerous excursions into the bush looking for buried treasure and down to Pipestone Creek, wading and picnicking. The following year the family moved to Goodfare. The newly built house was moved there too.

In 1967, Carol married Buck Thomson. Their three girls are Rhonda (1968), Roxanne (1970), and Peggy (1976). Diane married Don Brown in 1971. Their children are Debbie (1971), and David (1972). In 1972 Joan married Jim Loewen. Their family consists of two girls, Heather (1976), and Jamie (1978).

Tom continued to farm in Wembley by moving his machinery back and forth until he sold the farm to Maureen Pegler and her parents. They also bought the house as Tom and Lydia had bought a neighbour's farm in the Goodfare area, with a house on it. Maureen Pegler had the house moved back to the farm where it sits today, on the original foundation.

Raymond married Lori Cameron in 1977. Their children are Kari (1977) and a new one to be added in February 1980.

In April 1977, Tom and Lydia sold their land and retired to Hythe, where they presently live. Lydia works part-time at Oakford's Store, in the dry goods department. Tom has a partnership in two gravel trucks, with two sons-in-law, Jim Loewen and Don Brown. Curling and fishing are favorite pastimes. They enjoy camping with their children and grandchildren as well. Tom and Lydia recently took a trip to Yorkshire, England to visit Tom's cousins.



The Big Seven, unloading in Grande Prairie in 1917. Bill Craig, Alex Craig, Bill Watson, Ross Beatty, Jim Howard, Gordon Cox, Omey Stewart.



Combining with pick-up, threshing wheat on farm of Alfred Stephenson and sons. Cash cost of operating, not including time of labor or horses, wheat one cent per bushel. September 5, 1931.



Bill Head on right pitching bundles in the 1920's.



John Stoll stooking.

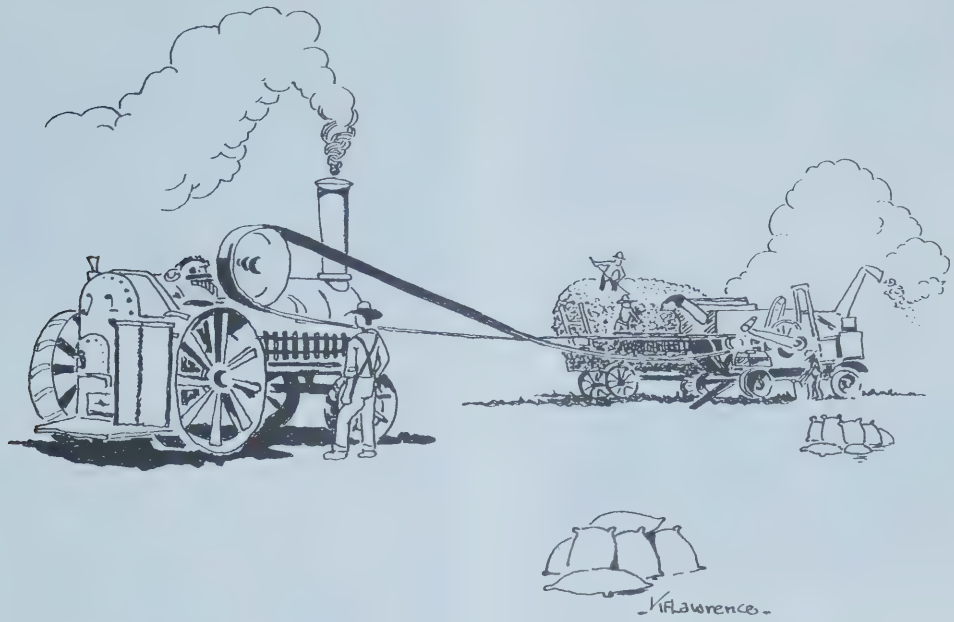


J.B. LePlace cutting his oats, about 1929.



Threshing in October, 1947.

Chapter 4: Dimsdale



Bridgebank U.F.W.A.

Minutes of the meeting of the Bridgebank U.F.W.A. for July 26th, 1934. President, Mrs. George Stoll; Vice-president, Mrs. George Cranston; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Alex Craig.

Mrs. Strong, director for the Peace River Constituency, visited this part of the country two weeks ago, and while here organized a U.F.W.A. local. A meeting was called at the home of Mrs. Alex Craig at which five ladies were present and all agreed to join the new local. Three more ladies were unable to attend but said they would join with us.

Mrs. George Stoll was elected president, Mrs. George Cranston vice-president and Mrs. Alex Craig secretary-treasurer. At the suggestion of Mrs. Stoll we named the local "Bridgebank U.F.W.A." after Mrs. Alex Craig's farm. It was decided that we hold our first meeting August 9th at the above farm at half past two. Mrs. Strong mentioned that any motions made and carried must stand unless rescinded at a regular meeting in accordance with the constitution.

The History of Dimsdale

Frank A. "Lacombe" Johnston decided to abandon his original homestead in the heavily wooded Pipestone Creek area in the early months of 1910 and find himself land that could be more easily cleared. He found it on the long open rolling stretches a few miles south of Bear Lake on the Grande Prairie. He built his log cabin on the south shore of a small, spring-fed lake and knew he had found an ideal farming country. Before he was through he had acquired several quarter sections of land in the area around him, known as Spring Lake or sometimes Spring Creek.

In July of that year, W.C. Dillon and John Eisenman came seeking land, too. The Spring Lake area seemed the most suitable land they had seen, and when they stopped at Johnston's and talked and were neighbored to, they knew they had found a good site. Dillon chose land one and a half miles south of Johnston's and Eisenman just west of Dillon's. Thus the beginning of a new community was made.

Frank Johnston's home was the early distribution point for mail to the homesteaders of the district. Not a regular post office, it was eventually closed during World War I and farmers were forced to pick up their mail at Grande Prairie, as they had had to do with stamps and money orders right along anyway.

In April of 1912, a meeting was held at Johnston's to discuss forming a school district and building a church, with the possibility of using the same building for both. It was decided, however, to keep the two institutions separate and so the Spring Creek Presbyterian church was built on the SW 10-71-7-W6 and the Wapiti School was built on the NE 8-71-7-W6. The school opened in the fall of 1913, and the church was ready for use about that time, too.

That winter, "The scholars of the Wapiti school district, better known as Spring Lake, will give an entertainment under the direction of their teacher, Mrs. Marietta Taylor, on Thursday evening, December 4th commencing at 8 p.m.", announced the press of November 25, 1913. "The admission will be free. Those attending will bring pies with them which will be auctioned off. The proceeds will go toward buying window shades, lamps, etc. for the school." It was reported as "quite a success" with $26 taken in for use of the school.

That winter also, the community enjoyed a concert at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Dillon on whose land the Presbyterian Church had been erected by Rev. Forbes that year, one and a half miles south of the present site of the hamlet of Dimsdale. The concert was given by the Women's Society to raise money for the church organ.



Dimsdale in 1945.



Old Dimsdale hall.

With this in view they arranged for sale of work and a supper and managed to clear some $53.40 toward their enterprise.

A little over 60 years ago, residents of the area heard exciting news that the railway was being surveyed west from Grande Prairie, and would cut through the Johnston lands.

The Railroad Engineer, Henry Dimsdale, blew the first steam toot and the train snorted up to the new station about 1924 for the first time. He not only gave the gathered knot of farmers (to whom the railway meant shortened shipping hauls) a thrill, but he gave the hamlet and district a new name - Dimsdale.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Ramsfield opened the first store in Dimsdale, having moved to the hamlet from Wanham, where they had operated a similar store. Mrs. Ramsfield had been district nurse at Wanham and now became a valuable asset to the Dimsdale community.

A second store was built and operated by a Mr. Frank Smith in the late 1920's. Mr. Ramsfield bought Smith out and converted the building into a house. It was moved onto one acre of land belonging to R.O. Johnston and was occupied by many different families before being moved to the Crane-Bill Ranch. It was later moved back to Dimsdale to become the U.G.G. residence. It was used in this capacity until being sold to Shirley Barrett. It still stands in the same place.

The Ramsfield store was a going concern at first. Supplies were hauled by truck and train from Grande Prairie and Wembley. Then came 1929 and the Great Depression. The business went broke, followed by a fire which destroyed the building. It was rebuilt by Pratt and Morrison and operated by the Ryan family for awhile. Then in 1930, Norman and Gladys Leslie moved over from Glen Leslie and became storekeepers and postmaster. For many years their store was the hub of the district, a place to buy what was needed, a post office and a place to meet friends and neighbors. Many will remember the kindness and hospitality, shown to all, by the Leslies. In 1967 Postmaster Leslie was presented with a commemorative plaque honoring his 35 years of service and the post office was closed. The Leslies retired to Grande Prairie in 1968. The building was used as a dwelling and was later destroyed by fire.

Sometime during the 1920's, a blacksmith shop was built in Dimsdale, and in 1928 was bought by Tony Linden. The last job that was done in the shop was the shoeing of a team of horses for Mr. VanSickle that fall. Then Mr. Linden went to work in the bush for the winter and the following year the building was converted into a community hall.

Mr. VanSickle, whose horses were the last shod in the blacksmith-shop-cum-hall, was killed in a wood sawing accident, leaving a widow and five children. They moved from their homestead to Dimsdale and resided in the hamlet for many years.

During the early days there were three grain elevators. The first to open was the Northern, followed by the Pool and the U.G.G. The old Northern was dismantled in Saskatchewan, and shipped by rail to Dimsdale and reassembled. It was later sold to National Grain, after which it was bought by the Alberta Wheat Pool. It was used until the early 1960's and was demolished about 1972. Mr. Ramsfield was the first Northern agent, followed by Frank Sumner, Walter Johnson, Hedley Bird, Art Simpson, Bud Luckey, Hedley Johnson and Clifton VanSchaick. There may have been others but their identity has been lost.

The "Pool" was opened in 1929 with Edgar Jebb as agent. Edgar was followed by Jack Reeve in 1931. The building was struck by lightning and burned in 1932. More misfortune struck when Mr. Reeve died of food poisoning. Norman Leslie was agent from 1936-1942, followed by Clarence Henderson, then again Norman Leslie. There were a lot of changes, some of which were; Ivor Olson, Don Reid, Marv Morrow, Arvid Bremer, Lief Lovrod, Ken Blair and Bill Jones. The doors were closed in 1973.

The U.G.G. was opened by Mr. Love as agent early in 1930. Bob Anderson was agent for a time, followed by



Social gathering about 1924.
Left to right; back row: Mr. Dillon, Mr. Bill Belfry, Mr. Omi Stewart, Mr. Stoll, John Stokke, Henry Stokke and Mr. Stephenson.
Middle row: Mrs. Stoll, Carrie Stephenson, Mrs. Stephenson, Mrs. Dillon, Mrs. Lottie Stokke, Mrs. Belfry, Mrs. Stewart and at end Jo Stewart.
Front row: Marjorie and Frank Stoll, Ruth Dillon, Evelyn Thompson, Charlie Stewart, Erna Stokke, Emily Stephenson, Edna Stokke and John Stoll.



The senior competitors' calf class at the 1934 Field Day at Alex Craig's farm Wembley, June 23. Jack kennedy in foreground with prize calf.

Art Hays for many years. In 1946 Elwood Rooney became agent, providing good service and much community help until 1955, when the Rooneys moved to Clairmont. Then came Allie Peterson, Howard Anderson and finally Angus McClellan. The elevator closed about 1970.

From the Dimsdale column of the August 30, 1951 Herald Tribune we learned that, "In a few days now, Dimsdale will enjoy all the convenience and comforts that accompany the event of electric power in a community. Canadian Utilities have surveyed a line from Highway 2 straight south to the hamlet. From Dimsdale the line will go east as far as the home of A.G. Linden. It is hoped that finances will permit the wiring of the hall. First class lighting together with its recently acquired new suit of ironboard paint will make it a building to be proud of. The lighting may require a further community effort, which no doubt as in the past will be forthcoming."

Hystad Brothers were the first to start a planing mill at Dimsdale in the mid 1940's. They also drilled the first water well in the hamlet, across the tracks from the store.

Dimsdale Community Circle

by Mrs. Mable McIntosh

Mrs. E.D. Brown organized a "Ladies Club" in connection with the Spring Creek Church. She was chosen as president, and Mrs. N. Talbot as secretary. After a few years, due to health reasons, Mrs. Brown wasn't able to attend any more meetings.

Due to a scarcity of members, we decided to change the name, Mrs. Don Noyes suggested Dimsdale Community Circle. All agreed that was quite acceptable. From then on our membership increased, as any lady living in the district was free to join.

In 1936 the D.C.C. met at the home of Mrs. Leslie to elect new officers. Mrs. J.L. McIntosh was elected president, Mrs. Fred Smith vice-president and Mrs. Guy Farr, secretary-treasurer. We met once a month in various homes. We worked for the community and the church. We put on many fowl suppers which were well attended. Admission - adults 50¢, children 35¢. We often had to work under difficulties for there was no electric power those days. The gas lamps often had to be taken down to be pumped up again. Water was hauled in cream cans. We had two cook stoves in our kitchen, which consumed a lot of wood. Members had to take their own dishes, knives and forks, etc., and what a job it was to sort them out afterwards to take you own home. As time went on we were able to buy our own dishes and cutlery and store them in the kitchen cupboards in the hall.

In 1939 World War II broke out. At many of our meetings we made and packed ditty bags to send overseas. We wanted to make money to send to the Red Cross. We decided to have a joint concert to be put on in the Dimsdale hall. We contacted the school teachers in Percy, Flying Shot, Millarston and our own teacher, Fred Howlett, to ask them to try and get some form of entertainment from each of their school districts, to be put on a particular night. This they did. Now, our hall was too small to have more than our own people, so we decided to clean out the barn, which was new and hadn't been used much. Ernie Cowell said he would haul a load of clean shavings from George Stephen's sawmill to put on the floor. We ladies, Mrs. Leslie, Farr, Agar, Noyes, Johnston and McIntosh arranged to meet at the barn, dressed in work clothes, with forks and shovels to clean out the barn. With much merriment and muscle power we finished the job that afternoon. The shavings arrived, planks were borrowed from the George Stephen's mill to make a stage and seats. Admission was adults, 75¢, children 50¢. The hall was packed, and I remember that we were all very pleased and considered it a huge success.

In 1945, many of our meetings during the winter were held at the home of Mrs. Crane-Williams. One winter we put on a play. We practiced at the Crane-Williams home. Mr. Crane-Williams was our director.

By now Mrs. Hawkes was our president and Mrs. Fred Smith was our secretary. We sent $10 to the Salvation Army every year.

Plans were made for placing the money where we felt it would do the most good. Mrs. McIntosh moved we give $60 to the United Church minister to be applied on his salary from Spring Lake, seconded by Mrs. McKeeman. Mrs. McKeeman moved we donate $3 toward paying for storm windows for the Wembley manse. Mrs. Leslie moved we donate cash to send each boy from Dimsdale and Millarston, in the armed forces, a parcel. Mrs. Agar was now president and Olive McIntosh as secretary-treasurer.

We made many quilts. Mrs. Konovecki donated two fleeces of wool. We met in homes to pull and card wool. Quilting frames were borrowed from Mrs. Dick Dunfield. We did the quilting in the hall. These quilts were raffled and the money sent to the Red Cross.

The Dimsdale Hall and Recreational Society

by Mrs. Jean Rooney and Mrs. Signe Luckey

I'm not too sure of the early history of the hall -- evidently the one in use when we arrived in Dimsdale in 1930 had been a blacksmith shop at one time. The rental fee of $10 a year, which was paid to the Northern Alberta Railways, was paid on the blacksmith shop site. My early memories are of chicken suppers -- delicious meals with the ladies serving large crowds in limited space, and a smoking stove not helping matters. The community concerts with local talent were highlights of the year. The dances were family affairs and all ages were on the floor. The ordinary dances were interspersed with box socials, masquerade dances, pie socials, etc.

By looking through old minute books of the Dimsdale Community Club I was able to follow the history of the organization from 1934 to 1967. The proceeds from dances in 1934 were $7.15, $7.90, $8.95 and similar

figures. The total cost of music and lunch expenses for the same dances were $5.80, $8, $7.

In March 1935, Hubert Sumner moved that a committee be nominated to build a community barn -- that committee was Ted Lewis, Joe Howell and Jack McIntosh. The barn was built by real community effort -- the men even had a bee to haul the logs, arriving in Dimsdale in the small hours of the morning.

In 1936, Soren Fredrickson was president, and Miss Peggy MacAlister was secretary. The proceeds from the chicken supper that year were $17.16. Card parties - 500 games - were held through all these years -- usually in the homes.

In 1938 lumber was bought to side the north end of the hall. A bean supper and card party was one entertainment - prizes not to exceed 50¢. At a meeting held at the ball diamond, arrangements were made to hold the sports on the last day of school -- prizes not to exceed $7 -- motion by Jack McIntosh and Mrs. R. Johnston. The sports committee were J. McIntosh, W. Fletcher, and B. Anderson.

A bill from 1940 listed the following items: 4 bread - 40¢, butter - 30¢ per pound, coffee - 55¢ per pound and hall cleaning - 25¢.

In 1942, Art Hayes was president and Mary McKeeman was secretary. The membership fee was 25¢. Members were Art Hayes, Mr. and Mrs. H.S. Stephenson, Mr. and Mrs. H. Bird, Mr. and Mrs. J. Stephenson, Mr. and Mrs. N. Leslie, K. Leslie, Mr. and Mrs. D. McKeeman, Mr. and Mrs. S. Agar, I. Agar, Mr. and Mrs. L. Hawkes, Mrs. Redmond, Blanche Smith. In June 1942 money from the Tip-Top Companion Club (a young people's club which had been organized in 1937) was turned over to the community club. That year community farewells were held for the VanSickles, Ken McIntosh, and the Birds.

In 1943, Jack Stephenson was president and Don Noyes secretary. Ernie Cowell was appointed auditor.

At the annual meeting in December 1943, Harold Nicholson was elected president, Mrs. Lela Agar, vice-president and Gordon McIntosh, secretary-treasurer. A stove was bought from D. Noyes for $17.50 to be used in the hall. Members that year were the following families: D. Noyes, L. Hawkes, H. Stephenson, H. Nicholson, G. Stoll, J. Stephenson, Agar, A. Brown, J. McIntosh, N. Leslie, A. VanSickle, S. Fredrickson, T. Linden, A. Hayes, V. Elford. Mrs. Leslie was given an honorary membership for the extra help she had always contributed to the community ventures.

On December 2, 1944, J.S. Sutherland was elected president, J. Stephenson, vice-president, with G. McIntosh continuing as secretary-treasurer. A vote of thanks was given to Grafton McLevin for the load of wood he donated.

On January 5, 1946, the annual meeting elected I.S. Agar, president, D.M. Noyes, vice-president, and Jean Leslie as secretary-treasurer. Directors were; Ken McIntosh, S. Fredrickson, and L. Hawkes.

Moved by D.M. Noyes that inasmuch as we have confidence in our executive, we hereby authorize them to take such steps as they may deem necessary to form a company, apply for a charter, or take such other steps as may be necessary to ensure the raising of sufficient funds to build, rebuild, or otherwise create a hall. Seconded by V.R. Elford. Carried.

After several meetings and much discussion on rebuilding the barn for a hall, or buying the U.G.G. annex, which was for sale, or building a new building, the executive finally decided to purchase lumber and build a new hall.

It was decided that the name of the Dimsdale Community Club be changed to conform with the regulations governing the granting of a charter -- the new name to be the Dimsdale Recreational Society.

Mr. Glyn Walters was hired as carpenter with many men offering their time to assist with the building. Many people contributed money as donations to the hall fund, too. The old hall was sold to Mr. L. Hawkes for $100. The expenses for the new hall totalled $2,238.97 with the following items listed: Lumber - $1041.08, Roofing -- $359.97, Nails, tar, etc. -- $53.29, Cement -- $75.03, Windows, tarpaper, stovepipes -- $67.33, Hinges -- $14.10, Sand -- $15.06, Brick, glass, paper -- $45.01, Hauling shavings -- $15.03, Wages -- $553.07.

In 1947, at the annual meeting, it was moved that the 1946 executive remain on duty, but this honor was declined. The new executive chosen was E. Rooney president, I.S. Agar vice-president, Lilian Redmond secretary-treasurer, with the following as directors - V. Elford, L. Hawkes, Mrs. Agar, and S. Fredrickson. Suggestions for the ladies dressing room, kitchen door, siding and painting the outside of the hall were left with the executive.

In 1949, the executive was E. Rooney as president, S. Sutherland vice president, and K. McIntosh secretary-treasurer. Executive directors were: D. Noyes, J. Stephenson, Bud Luckey, I.S. Agar, Mrs. Agar and Mrs. Redmond. It was decided during 1949 that the original loans to build the hall would be changed to donations, as the effort to repay each donor would tax the money making ability of the hall. It was decided to charge the Grande Prairie School Division $25 per month dating from October 1, 1949, for the use of the hall for a school.

In 1951, the executive changed to K. McIntosh president, G. McIntosh vice-president, L. Agar secretary-treasurer. Directors were: N. Leslie, I. Agar, D. Greentree, W.E. Luckey and L. Hawkes. It was agreed that electricity would be installed in the hall when it came to Dimsdale later that summer.

In 1953, the executive chosen was: A. Grant president, Mrs. Agar vice-president, and G. McIntosh secretary-treasurer. Directors were: I. Agar, D.M. Noyes, K. McIntosh, H. Stephenson, G. Leslie, and Bud Luckey.

In December 1954, it was decided to buy quarter-inch masonite to glue to the floor to improve it, but this was not done until the spring of 1957 - a shortage of material was one reason. The executive for 1957 were: J. Stephenson president, Mrs. Agar vice-president, G. McIntosh secretary-treasurer. Directors were: D.M. Noyes, I. Agar, L. Hawkes, A. Thomson, Mrs. G. Stephens, and Ken McIntosh. It was decided at this time that the community barn should be disposed of. In July 1957, it was sold to I. Agar for $150.

On April 28, 1958, a new executive was chosen, with L. Hawkes president, Mrs. H. Stephenson vice-president, and Mrs. H. Sutherland secretary-treasurer. The directors remained the same except J.S. Sutherland replaced L. Hawkes. It was decided to build a new front door, redecorate the hall and purchase chairs. Members that year were the following families: L. Hawkes, N. Leslie, K. McIntosh, J. Stephenson, J.S. Sutherland, G. Stephens, D.M. Noyes, I. Agar, G. McIntosh, A. Thomson, H. Stephenson, D. McKeeman, and J. Pickles.

In June 1958, it was decided to make a small meeting room by removing the partition between the cloak room

and the kitchen. New rest room facilities (outdoor plumbing) were in the planning stages. Evidently the style of wedding dresses with their large skirts was not taken into consideration in deciding on the size of door to the new facilities. At least one bride got stuck in the doorway and had to do a lot of wiggling to get all the crinolines etc. out of the door. A picnic committee was established - A. Thomson, M. McIntosh, L. Agar, P. Thomson, L. Hawkes, J.S. Sutherland, G. McIntosh.



Wayne Davies presenting an award to Mrs. Sutherland for over 20 years service as secretary to Dimsdale Hall Board.

In April 1959, the executive chosen was L. Hawkes president, G. Stephens vice president, H. Sutherland secretary-treasurer, and directors A. Thomson, D.M. Noyes, J. Stephenson, S. Sutherland, A. Grant and L. Agar. The following new names appeared on the membership list - K. Davies, E. Gillespie, E. Valin, and W. Konevicki. This was the year that aluminum siding was purchased and put on the roof. A delegation from the Flying Shot community attended re the possibility of joining the Recreational Society as a group. Moved by A. Grant, seconded by D. Noyes that we welcome any and all persons represented. Carried unanimously.

The annual meeting of December 1959 elected L. Hawkes president, James Tissington vice president and H. Sutherland secretary-treasurer. Directors were K. Davies, D. McKeeman, J. Pickles, Mrs. E. Valin, J. Stephenson, A. Grant, D.M. Noyes, and H. Stephenson. It was decided to hold dances every two weeks. A door guard of plywood was to be constructed and plywood was to be purchased for table tops. New names on the list of members were M. Morrow, R. Dool, G. Schubert, W. Linden and J. Tissington.

In the president's report at the annual meeting on December 17, 1961 mention was made of the new floor in the hall, the porch built on, and gravel and culvert built up in front of the hall. The new executive were G. McIntosh president, D. McKeeman vice-president, J. Tissington secretary-treasurer, with directors S. Sutherland, L. Thompson, A. Grant, K. Davies, E. Valin, M. Davies, V. Hawkes and J. Stephenson.

1962 saw an attempt to form a bush league for ball, a little league team for those 12 and under. The usual Farmer's Day picnic was held on June 8, followed by a dance. There were a few changes in the executive at the annual meeting in December. Edith Valin became vice president and S. Horby became secretary-treasurer. New names on the membership list were; R.E. Harrison, G. Nealy, L. Jobson. S. Tissington, A. Dryer, W. Davies, D. Dunfield, W. Mast, B. Dunfield, J. Duncan, D. Blackmore, A. Stierle, A. Stewart, L. Lovrod, E. Macauley, and D. Lux. There were 51 curlers that year.

In 1963 hall rates were set for outside organizations renting the hall -- $25 for service clubs - $50 for orchestras sponsoring a dance. Wood was still used for heating so a bee for wood sawing was held on December 9, 1963. Mabel Davies became vice-president, and Mrs. Germaine Adair secretary-treasurer. The board of directors were D. Dool, A. Grant, K. Davies, V. Hawkes, J. Tissington and F. Budesheim. Building and sports committees were formed each year.

Twenty members were present at the annual meeting in 1965, electing as president, G. McIntosh, for vice-president, M. Davies, for secretary-treasurer, A. Stewart, and on the executive, K. Davies, J. Tissington, H. Stephenson, V. Hawkes, A. Walters, H. Sutherland. The local boundaries for fees were set from Highway 2 on the north south of the airport and east around Flying Shot Lake, to the river on the south and west to the #8 range line.

The meeting in 1966 elected B. Lewis as president, M. Davies vice-president and W. Stephenson secretary-treasurer.

At a directors meeting on April 18, 1967 it was decided to install a furnace in the hall. Fred Steinke was to be approached to be carpenter in charge of building the rest room.

In 1967 the executive stayed the same as the year before. Director H. Sutherland was the only one replaced and Hud Adair was elected. The cost of membership was raised to two dollars per family. Card parties were to be started again to be held every second week.

At a meeting of the directors on January 14, 1968, Ken Davies moved that an addition be made to the ladies cloakroom. Vernon Hawkes moved that wiring and electric stove be purchased. Both motions were carried. At the general meeting on January 21, 1968 a junior branch of the Dimsdale Recreational Society was started, with Sam Tissington as president, Larry MacAlister as vice-president, and Vicki MacAlister as secretary were the executive. The branch was later disbanded.

The senior executive for 1969 was president, Brian Lewis; vice-president, Wallace Bean, and secretary-treasurer, H.A. Sutherland. The board of directors included Vernon Hawkes, Hudson Adair, James Tissington, Ken Davies, Gordon McIntosh, and Harold Stephenson. A membership drive was to be held. Ladies had a booth at the Dimsdale Lewis Trucking softball tournament held on July 19-20. A net profit of $394.83 was shown, far exceeding all expectations. The kitchen got a great boost with the purchase of a 100 cup coffee urn and cutlery.

Dimsdale - Millarston Sports

by Rina J. Roos

As in most communities, sports took an important place in the early days in the Dimsdale - Millarston areas.

Prior to 1926 there was already a Spring Creek Baseball team. The coach and adviser was Fred Bobeng. Some of the players were, Harold Anderson, John and Leonard Eisenman, Ralph and George Johnston.

In the early thirties both Dimsdale and Millarston had fastball teams. Lewis Hawkes pitched for the Millarston team and Art Hayes for the Dimsdale team.

Some of the known players on the Dimsdale team were: Bill, Had and Chet Aseltine, Art Fletcher, Wm. Godfrey, Ralph and George Johnston, Jack McIntosh, Frank Stoll, Ralph Van Sickle while Alex Beaulieu played some and school teacher Fred Howlett joined later. Bob Anderson was the umpire.

The diamond was on Ralph Johnston's quarter just southeast of Dimsdale (NE-10-71-7-W6). Ralph Johnston played ball for 32 consecutive years and was known to walk 20 miles to play.

Playing on the Millarston team at this time were: Don Caldwell, Ray Campbell, Allan Gerow, Lewis Hawkes, Iain MacAlister, Bill and Tom Mitchell, Lorne Rennick and his brother, and Seath Sutherland. Walter MacAlister and Billy Robertson joined in later years.

Millarston's diamond was located on the northwest corner of the school section. The teams played twice a week, Wednesdays and Sundays.

Competition was fierce and there was a dividing line between Millarston and Dimsdale that nobody dared to cross.

By 1937, the ladies of the district were playing softball. Minutes of a July meeting of the Tip Top Companion Club, a young people's club, show that it was moved by Pollyanna Johnston and seconded by Marjorie Stoll that the girls organize a softball team with the club to cover the expenses.

The Herald Tribune of July 6, 1939 reports:

"The ladies team played the Saskatoon ladies losing by a score of 12-8. As the Saskatoon team is one of the best in the circuit, our young ladies did remarkably well."

Approximately 1944-45 the Millarston diamond was moved half mile south on the property of Gordon McIntosh. This piece was plowed by Frank Stoll with D.M. Noyes pulling stumps and the rest of the ball players picking roots. Millarston had an excellent team at this time.



Hystad Brother's Ball Team at Dimsdale.
Left to right: Joe Zahn, Glen Campbell, Wally Bean, Sigfried, Alvin Campbell, Alex Cameron, Ray Bean and Bill Campbell (standing). Boys seated are Dennis and Fred Tissington.



Dimsdale Baseball team.
Left to right; standing: Frank Stoll, Don Noyes, Don Reid, Irwin Noyes, Vernon Hawkes.
Sitting: Bev Van Schaick, Ken McIntosh, Gordon McIntosh, Allie Peterson, Bob Thomson, Henry Kasprow, and bat boy Neal Thomson.

After two years, however, the team dispersed and the decision was made to amalgamate with the Dimsdale team. Dimsdale at this time had two teams, the Hystad Team and the Dimsdale Team.

In August of 1951 the Dimsdale softball team clothes itself in distinction by winning the cup donated for the Northern Alberta Fastball Championship. The community honored the team with the social evening in the hall on Wednesday evening August 22nd.

In 1951-52 it was decided to change from fastball to baseball.

After 1956 the team changed back to fastball again. At this time Wally Hawkes introduced the "Windmill Pitch", which stirred up quite a controversy as to its legality.

After Wally's untimely death in 1962, the Dimsdale diamond was renamed "Wally Hawkes Stadium".



Left to right; standing: Vernon Hawkes, Frank Stoll, Walter MacAlister, Ken McIntosh, Elwood Rooney (coach).
Kneeling: George Bain, Ed McIntosh, Gordon McIntosh, Dennis McIntosh and Bill Hawkes. (Dimsdale Fastball team).

Playing ball was not the only sport. In the winters of 1926 and 1927 there was an active hockey team at Dimsdale. No fancy hockey equipment or rink. They just cleared some ice at Spring Lake and away they went. Ralph Johnston was the goal keeper while Jack McIntosh and George Johnston were some of the players.

Dimsdale News in the Northern Tribune of October 28, 1937 had the following skating news:

"A few of the local sports fans spent Saturday last at Mr. F.R. Anderson's brushing the site of the proposed skating rink. They expect to have the ground plowed this week. Next Saturday it is hoped that a large enough crowd will be on hand to level and grade the area in readiness for flooding."

In later years boards were put up for a hockey rink at the Wapiti School. Many loads of water were hauled in by the school boys with the help of some of the dads. The water tank was mounted on sleighs. The water flowed rather unevenly as the gound was not very level. In the cold freezing weather they would get soaking wet, pailing the water from dam or lake to the tank and from the tank to the rink. In no time they would be walking like robots. "Practically needed a ladder to get out of your pants," recalls one player.

However, hauling water and shoveling snow was good conditioning for the players. One school team of eight players went to play the best Grande Prairie team in 1952. They had no coach and no training but the eight tough rascals, through sheer luck and determination beat the best Grande Prairie team 3 to 1. The eight winners were Donald and Wallace Hawkes, Henry Kasprow, Irwin Noyes, Brian and Hughie Sutherland, Bev Van Schaick and Alvin Campbell.

Curling began in the district nearly 30 years ago when Lewis Hawkes interested a few others in having a bonspiel at Wembley. They used to curl on Spring Lake (Dimsdale Lake) all winter and have their bonspiel in Wembley Curling Rink.

In 1960 the Dimsdale Recreational Society took an interest in the curling activities. At the Society's annual meeting held on December 4, 1960, Mr. L. Hawkes suggested that a curling club be formed for the winter months. Ken Davies gave the rink report, "Rink site was cleared at a very low charge by Nilsson Bros. Other work done included moving skating house (old Lucky Tree School House), installation of lighting fixtures. Several members in the immediate vicinity adjacent to the rink (west of Flying Shot Lake) agreed to look after the project." Sports committee members, S. Sutherland, V. Hawkes, K. Davies, J. Stephenson, M. Morrow, E. McIntosh, J. Tissington, L. Finch. It was moved by D. McKeeman that we organize Dimsdale Curling Club, seconded by Fred Budesheim. S. Sutherland was to try to arrange for Wembley Curling Club ice one night a week.



Fred Budesheim receiving award from Eric Stamp for curling 25 years in Dimsdale Bonspiel, 1979.

The skating rink west of Flying Shot Lake was very active for three or four years. The interest in flooding and cleaning the rink gradually waned when television was introduced to the district, until after one particularly heavy snowfall the rink was not cleaned again. The club house still stands as a reminder of the once fervent communal activities.

School has always played an important part in sports interest. The Northern Tribune of October 13, 1932 reports in the "Along the Wapiti" column:

D. Bain and Jean LaPlace set up the children's basketball nets on the school grounds.

July 6/33 - School closed Thursday at noon. In the afternoon children's sports events were held. Jean LaPlace took charge of sports assisted by D. Bain, Mr. Frederickson and J. MacLean. Running, races, jumping, high jump, potato races, three legged race, tug-of-war, cross country run and softball games were played.

July 20/33 - Also had a school softball team, 7 to 14 years. Four girls and five boys who learned the game since they made money for their sports equipment last year. Some of them are no taller than the bat.

July 4/40 - under Dimsdale News - The Wapiti school picnic was held at the grove south of Dimsdale on Friday afternoon, June 28th with the usual athletic events. Novelty races and three school ball teams played. An enjoyable afternoon was reported.

Skiing was a popular winter pastime among the younger folks. It was not an unusual sight to see three or four youngsters on skis coming down the road holding on to a rope which was tied to a horse's tail. Many kids skied up to four miles to school behind horses or rigs while going to Wapiti School.

Table Tennis tournaments were held at the Wapiti School in the 1950s. Those were the days of board tables. There was one at Wapiti School where the boards were lengthwise on the table and one would be higher than the other. Imagine hitting a ball back that comes to you and lands where two boards are not level. "Sure does develop your reflexes," recalls Bev Van Schaick.

In 1952 or 1953 there was a young boys baseball team coached by Ivor Olson, Wheat Pool Agent at Dimsdale. They played in a small league and in several tournaments.

The School At Dimsdale

by Frank Stoll, Mabel McIntosh and Jean Rooney

The first meeting of the Spring Creek (Dimsdale) neighborhood was held at F.A. Johnston's (SE 16-71-7-W6) on April 22, 1912. Alexander Forbes acted as chairman and F.A. Johnston as secretary. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the creation of a church building (on S½ 10-71-7-W6) to be used also for school purposes, and also to organize a school district in accordance with the laws of Alberta.

An area four miles square was decided upon, namely sections 3 through 10 and 15 through 22 in township 71, range 7, west of the 6th meridian. The district was to be known as Spring Creek School District. A committee of William Dillon, N.N. Anderson and F.A. Johnston were directed to fill out and mail a petition for the formation of a public school district.

On July 16, 1912, formation of the school district became official. The name of the school district was changed from Spring Creek to Graystone and the number assigned was 2802. P.U. Clubine was chairman of the school board and F.A. Johnston was secetary-treasurer.

In November, W.C. Dillon replaced F.A. Johnston as secretary-treasurer for the remainder of 1912.

At the annual meeting on January 15, 1913, of the Graystone S.D. #2802, Clubine and Dillon were joined by H. Watson as the third trustee. The sum of $200 was borrowed to purchase building material to be bought in Edson and freighted to Grande Prairie. P.U. Clubine was instructed to purchase and have delivered to the school site, a set of logs.

At the meeting of April 9, 1913, a letter from the Minister of Education was presented, changing the name of Graystone to Wapiti. Bills were presented for materials freighted from Edson amounting to $144.65.

In June that year, a contract was let to H. Lenz for erection of the school building on two acres of land in the northeast corner of NE 8-71-7-W6 recently secured from William Card for a school site. The following month a want ad was placed in the Grande Prairie Herald for a teacher. The November meeting shows bills paid to Mrs. C. Taylor, teacher, $140 for two months and $25 to H. Lenz for out houses and fence.

In December, 1914, Mrs. Mariette C. Taylor received three months teaching wages at $70 per month. In the new year, Mr. McLelland was elected to the school board, replacing P.U. Clubine. A motion was made for a six month school term, beginning April 1, 1915, with Miss Marion McNaught as teacher.

At the annual meeting held January 8, 1916, Mr. H. Watson replaced retiring William Dillon on the school board and secretary was instructed to write to Miss Margarite Johnson, re yearly engagement. She was hired for a ten month period at $75 per month. At the February meeting it was moved material be purchased to build a barn on the school site, and that Minerva Card be hired to do janitor work (with at least once-a-month scrubbing) at a salary of $2 per month. The municipality of Bear Lake #740 was requisitioned for the sum of $1,000.

R.D. Stewart was paid $35 for building a barn, in March 1916 and painting the barn cost $15. That month it was moved that the secretary receive $25 annual salary to be paid twice yearly.

In May 1916, Mr. R.W. Lickelt was engaged as teacher for balance of term at $75 per month.

Bear Lake Municipality was requested to pay $1,250 requisition owing the Wapiti S.D. as of June 10, 1916.



Mr. Leckelt, teacher, 1916, and his students.

The annual meeting in January 1917 saw F.A. Johnston re-elected to the board. A recommendation was made to the board to hire a truant officer. It was decided that the school be sided with galvanized metal and a ground to peak brick chimney be built. A school grounds beautification project was scheduled to take the form of a picnic in June. The Board meeting followed immediately after the annual meeting, at which Mrs. Clifford was hired as teacher and free tuition given her children.

At the January, 1918 meeting, it was decided that a well be dug and a pump installed on the road allowance half a mile west of the school to provide water, and that the school grounds be fenced with woven wire and the windows screened. Mrs. Clifford was hired as teacher for the ensuing year but later withdrew in order to teach in Grande Prairie. W.A. McLelland was re-elected to the Board and resumed his duty as secretary-treasurer.

On March 8, 1918, David Hunter was hired as teacher for $900 per year. The Board gave their entire support to Mr. Hunter, later that year, on any measures he found necessary to stop some of the pupils from watering their horses from the drinking water pail. The board accepted the resignation of Hunter Watson as trustee and on April 13 Fred Bobeng was elected at a special meeting to replace him.

At a special meeting in October 1918, school was closed until March 1, 1919, and the teacher notified. The re-election of Fred Bobeng to the Board took place at the 1919 annual meeting and he became secretary-treasurer for the following year. Miss Jennie Sundberg was hired for the year 1919. School did not commence until mid March due to flu in the district. Miss Sundberg resigned in July and Miss H.M. Robson was hired to complete the 1919 term. It was determined that the school year commence on March 1, 1920, and continue until December 24, with the board to decide if weather conditions should close the school November 30, 1920, when this date was achieved.



Miss Mallory, teacher at Wapiti School 1925-6, boarding with the Dillons. She was a niece of Mrs. Cap Cowell. Miss Mallory met a tragic death when her kimona sleeve caught fire. She was unable to remove the kimona. This happened approximately a year after she left the district.

At the annual meeting on January 20, 1920, E.D. Brown was elected to the board for three years, while C.R. Dillon replaced W.A. McLelland who resigned. School opened on March 15, with J.L. McIntosh as teacher. At the school fair that summer, top prize money went to Gladys May Brown ($4.50), Whitney Fletcher ($2.75), and George Johnston (75¢).

The resignation of J.L. McIntosh was accepted by the board in August, 1920 and application of Mrs. O.L. Simmons as teacher accepted. On January 6, 1921, at the annual meeting, E.D. Brown tendered his resignation from the board, while J.L. McIntosh was nominated for a three year term and Frank Frisby was elected to complete the E.D. Brown term. Later that month, Miss Ayleworth was interviewed for teacher. On July 25, 1921, application was made to Indian Head Experimental Farm for shrubs to plant a windbreak around the school.

The annual meeting of 1922 saw J.O. Stewart nominated to the board for a three year term, and W.A. Grant to finish the J.L. McIntosh two year term. Miss M.M. McDonald was hired as teacher with April 15 as starting date. In January 1923, Miss J.M. Redig was engaged as teacher for year 1923 at $1,000 per annum. That year J.O. Stewart was Board chairman, C.R. Dillon, secretary-treasurer, and W.A. Grant, trustee.

December 29, 1923 saw C.R. Dillon tendering his resignation and a replacement to be chosen at the annual meeting to be held on January 7, 1924. Miss Redig rehired as teacher in February 1924 and Mrs. N. Talbot was elected secretary-treasurer of the board and J.O. Stewart, chairman. Mr. Myers was granted tender to shingle the school. That fall Miss Bailey was teacher, but on December 13 was replaced by Miss Mallory.

Mr. Thompson became the new trustee in January 1925, with J.O. Stewart, chairman, and Mrs. N. Talbot, secretary-treasurer. Miss Mallory given permission to close school one day during carnival week. Summer holidays started July 1 and lasted for eight weeks and Miss Elinor Mallory's term expired at the end of June. Miss Eunice Holmes was hired as teacher, starting September 1, 1925.

In July 1926, J.L. McIntosh was hired as teacher, and the barn was repaired and the school cleaned. At the 1927 annual meeting, H. Thompson was replaced by Alfred Stephenson. Miss Martha Gudlaugson was hired as teacher for 1927 for the September to December period. Miss Helen Giberson was hired to begin the 1928 term from January to end of June when she resigned to become the bride of Mr. Carl Anderson of Hythe, Alberta.

(These notes and facts garnered from the first minute book of the Wapiti School District #2802 by Frank Stoll.)

Wapiti School continued ——by Mrs. M. McIntosh

By now the old log school was cold, so cold that the children's lunches used to freeze. Different families used to take their turn sending ingredients with the children to make soup, and enough milk to make a hot cup of cocoa for each child. In 1937 a brand new school was built. The old one was sold to Don Noyes, who used it for a pig-house. The new school had a full sized basement with a furnace, a coal bin, and a place to play. Card parties and a few dances were held.

Christmas concerts were eagerly looked forward to. This entailed a lot of work for teachers and students. Mrs. McIntosh used to walk to the school once a week to help with the singing of carols and to play the piano for them. Soren Fredrickson made an excellent Santa Claus, both stature-wise and personality-wise.

At the end of the school year, usually about the 29th or 30th of June, a school picnic was held. In the early years it was held on the Ralph Johnston farm, sheltered by a beautiful big grove of trees then later at the hamlet of Dimsdale. This was always a great day, (if it didn't rain). Races of all kinds, even to the honeymoon race, which always caused a lot of fun, high and broad jumps, javelin throw, and a pillow fight, followed by a ball game. Supper was served in the hall potluck style, after which more ball games were played, until it was evident it was time to go home, with a lot of tired and dirty youngsters, but all agreed they had a wonderful day.



Evelyn Roberts - 1932.



Allan McQuarrie - 1935.

—The following by Mrs. J. Rooney

Teachers who taught at the Wapiti were (we must humbly apologize if anyone is listed in the wrong year as these dates were gleaned from a mixture of individual memories, some stories written by families in the community, and also records at the county office):

1930-1931 Miss Anne Foss
1931-1932 Miss Evelyn Roberts
1932-1933 Miss Hazel Hartman
1933-34-35 Mr. A. McQuarrie
1935-36-37 Miss Doris Campbell
1937-1938 Mr. Whitney Fletcher
1938-1939 Miss Ellen Lewis
1939-1940 Mr. J. Fred Howlett
1940-1941 Mr. Mike Miller
1941-1942 Miss Evelyn Roberts
1942-1943 Mrs. Jeanne Westendorf
1943-1944 Miss Noreen O'Connell
1944-1945 Miss Raymonde Roberts
1944-June '45 Miss Marie Jubinville
1945-1946 Mr. J. Fred Howlett
1946-1947 Mr. Vernon McNamee
1947-1948 Mrs. Ingebjorge Olsson
1948-1949 Miss Eileen Murray
1948-49-50 Mr. Tom Shannon
1948-1949 Mr. J.L. McIntosh
1950-1951 Miss Mabel Wallace
1951-1952 Mrs. Anne Matheson
1952-1953 Miss Ursula Pankow
1953-1954 Verna Luckey
Edna Kiselczuk
1954-1955 Mrs. Pat Grant
1955- A. Dowhan

There were a few years around 1948 when classes were also held in the Dimsdale Hall because of the large number of students enrolled.

The summary written by Mrs. McIntosh gives the highlights of the school year. A few other thoughts come to mind - learning arithmetic with fish (cardboard of course) and a fishing line; spelling bees; going to school in 65° below Fahrenheit, with the Ralph Johnston family with a team and cutter, only to stand at school between the stove and the tin surrounding it to keep warm. The outdoor plumbing was an added attraction. I remember a cousin of mine losing her cap on one of those outdoor excursions - she was probably three years old at the time - and when we returned to the school concert she informed everyone in a distinct voice "Me lost me cap, me did," etc.

The popcorn balls made by the ladies for the Christmas candy bags will never be forgotten. Those concerts were one of the highlights in which everyone took part. I remember that when I was in grade three I was told to stand with the other students, move my lips but for heaven's sake don't make any sound.

The teachers were never too busy to give individual attention, even when it cut into their so-called free time. My grade nine teacher took me to stay with her at the boarding house in an effort to keep me from developing measles before writing the departmental exams. I got them anyway and had to write these exams with a shield over one eye.



Wapiti School Hockey Team - 1935.
Left to right; standing: Ken Brown, Bud Stephen, Gordon McIntosh, Keith Leslie, Alfred Macauley, Don Noyes, Mr. Miller (teacher).
Seated: Ed McIntosh, Jim Dillon, Dennis McIntosh and Allan Van Sickle.



Wapiti School in 1935. A.F. McQuarrie was teacher.
Left to right; back row: Ken McIntosh, Grace Van Sickle, Marjorie Stoll, Myrtle Macauley, Jean Leslie, Ruth Dillon, Pollyanne Johnston, Delia Cousineau, Madeline Macauley, Rose Cousineau and Anne Cousineau.
Second row: Keith Leslie, Bud Stephen, Ken Johnston, Ernie Macauley, Maurice Van Sickle, Harold Johnston, Gordon McIntosh, and Alfred Macauley.
Third row: Angie Macauley, Mary Stephen, and Aleda Stoll.
Fourth row (front): Jim Dillon, Allan Van Sickle and Dennis McIntosh.



Ursula Pankow's class of 1952.
Left to right; back row: Elizabeth Konevecki, Florence Noyes, Jessie Kasprow, Erwin Noyes, Alvin Campbell, Miss U. Pankow, Jean, Mary B., ? ?, Ruth Sutherland, Irene S.
Middle row: Neal Thompson, Carl Linden, Louis Pickles, Gloria Pickles, Sylvia Van Schaick, Delores Housworth, Dorothy Konevecki, Ann Sutherland.
Front row: Wallace Hawkes, Hughie Sutherland, Donald Hawkes, Jimmy Housworth, Beverley Van Schaick, Freddie Tissington, Henry Kasprow.
Missing: Myret and Brian Sutherland.



Marie Jubinville - 1945.

The one room schools are a thing of the past in most areas but I still feel that the training we received there helped us in later years. We may not have had all the advantages but we did have to work a little harder and concentrate more with the other eight grades surrounding us. That work and that concentration, as well as the interest shown in each student by each of our teachers helped us all when we went to the larger high schools.

Spring Creek Church

by Floyd Van Schaick

The Spring Creek Church was located on the Southwest corner of the SW 10-71-7-W6 homesteaded by Fred Bobeng, and later owned by Raymond Dillon. This church opened July 6, 1914 with Rev. A. Forbes, Presbyterian minister, in charge.

The church came into being with the perserverence of Dr. A. Forbes and voluntary help from the community, on 10 acres of land filed on for that purpose in 1911. The log walls were hewn on the inside, the rafters were placed, a rubberoid roof put on, doors and windows installed, and seats made from blocks of wood and planks.

In the summer of 1916 the seats were replaced with hand planed spruce benches, under the direction of Mr. Hugh Ferguson and a more intricate birchwood pulpit was built by Mr. McLennan, replacing the old one. By 1925 the leaky roof was replaced with shingles, the inside walls and ceiling lined with V-joint lumber and a few years later a porch and chimney were added. A lumber shed for horses was erected in 1928 under the direction of Ted Lewis.



Building Spring Creek United Church south of Dimsdale about 1912.



Church congregation 1930.



Mrs. Frank Johnston's Spring Creek Sunday School Class, late 20's.



Sunday School.
Left to right (back): Macauley sisters, Jean Leslie, Pollyanne Johnston, Mary Steven.
(Middle): Ken Johnston, Ernie Macauley and Gordon McIntosh.
(Front): Buddy Steven, Keith Leslie.

The first burials in the cemetery occured in 1916 when two men, Ole Sondal and E. Anderson, lost their lives by gas while boring a water well on the Paul Larson homestead. Ray Dillon may have been the last burial there. Most of the graves have since been moved although some markers and headstones still remain.

Some of the Sunday school teachers I recall are: Mr. E.D. Brown, Mr. Hugh Ferguson, Miss Freda Lewis, Mr. Gavin Stephens and his daughters Iola and Netta.

When the hall at Dimsdale was built, Sunday school and church were held there because of the convenience. Mrs. F.A. Johnston, Mrs. McIntosh, Mr. and Mrs. F.R. VanSchaick, and Mr. and Mrs. Roy Houseworth all taught Sunday school there.

Usually the minister from the Wembley United Church came to hold the services in the Spring Creek Church, some names were Rev. Simmons, Huston, Whaley, and Clugson.

Although against the better judgement of the Wembley church board a minister gave permission for this church to be used as a granary, which almost ruined it. It stands today near the graveyard, lonely, waiting to be repaired, to again be of service to the community.

Some of the early family names recalled by Mr. F.R. VanSchaick are: Dillon, Ferguson, Mitchell, and Brown. Later the G.M. Stephens and E.D. Brown became very active members. The pews from this church are now in McQueen Presbyterian Church located in the Pioneer Museum lot in Bear Creek Park, and some of the original organ was found some years ago in a pasture adjoining the church.

The Hudson Adairs

Hudson and Germaine Adair, with their three children, Dianne, Maureen and Rick moved to Dimsdale in August of 1959. They came from Grande Prairie, their home of the previous four years, having arrived there from their first home at Teepee Creek.

They originally bought the NW 21-71-7 W6 known as the Frisby place, from Henry Wiebe. In 1964, they purchased the quarter immediately across the road from this from Beverly Foster. There were no buildings on either place and the first chore was to build a couple of grain bins on the farm for storage and accommodation while the house was being built. The site was chosen overlooking the hamlet of Dimsdale with its elevators reflecting in Spring Lake to the south-east and the majestic Rocky Mountains to the south-west.

Hudson was employed by Shell Oil at their Grande Prairie refinery, a job which he relinquished some seven years later when the increased demands of his growing Jersey herd and farming operations required his full attention.



Germaine and Hudson Adair on 25th wedding anniversary, July 1973.
Standing left to right: Rick, Dianne.
Seated: Hud, Maureen, Germaine.

At time of writing he is a farm machinery sales representative for Co-op Implements, Germaine is Court Administrator for the Provincial Family and Juvenile Courts in Grande Prairie having been in the same position in excess of 20 years.

Dianne married Ralph Sebastian, second son of Paul and Evelyn Sebastian of Wembley in September of 1969. They have since made their home in Edmonton, where Dianne is a supervisor for a ladies' wear chain and Ralph is in the trucking business.

Maureen married Gerald Anderson son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred R. Anderson of Grande Prairie in October of 1969 and they spent the first couple of years of their married life in Salisbury, Rhodesia, Africa, where he taught school and she followed her hair-dressing career.

Upon their return to Grande Prairie, Gerald resumed his studies and became a chartered accountant. Their son Jay was born in April, 1973 and daughter Michelle in December, 1975.

Following graduation from St. Josephs High School and a couple of trips to Europe, Israel, Greece and other overseas points, Rick attended Grande Prairie Regional College where he took an active interest in school politics. During his first year, he was president of the Students Association and the second year the student representative of the College Board of Governors. He transferred to the University of Lethbridge for his final two years, during which time he became interested in a Special Education major named Joanne Van Trepp. They were married in August, 1978.

The Adairs have been active in various clubs and functions in the district including the UFA, Dimsdale Recreation Society, 4-H Clubs, Curling, card parties and rural telephone and Power Companies. They feel there could be no finer neighbors anywhere than those they've had in Dimsdale.

Bill Belfry

Bill Belfry came to what is now Dimsdale in the summer of 1911, and filed on a South African script. He lived with Norman and Nina Talbot that first summer while he built a log cabin on his script. During the summer, he and Norman put up a good quantity of upland hay. Come fall, he went back to the Prince Albert Logging Company, from whence he came. The following spring, he returned to Dimsdale to break soil on his land.

In about 1925 or 26, he was plowing with 12 head of horses on his land adjacent to the Wapiti school. He had one balky mare who lowered her head and refused to move. Bill knew he had the Wapiti school children for an audience, so he passed the lines to his hired man and with a war whoop, leaped from his plow onto the balker's back, fanning with his old plug hat. The balker came to life, along with the rest of the outfit and away they went, and with Bill's luck, the plow stayed right side up. Jessie Redick was the teacher at the time and after much bell ringing, the pupils left Bill's horse show to return to classes. Who wanted to trade a show like that for reading and writing?

Bill built a good house and barn on his place. Later the N.A.R. built a railway line to Wembley and it was so close to Belfry's house that he used the fence for one side of his lawn.

Belfry heard the passenger train leaving Wembley about five miles west, and wishing a ride into Grande

Prairie, he went out onto the railway track to walk to the boxcar station at Dimsdale. The passenger train caught up to him - the engineer blew the whistle and rang the bell, and drove his engine as close to Bill as he dared. Belfry, with hat in hand, and running, never left the track. At the station, he boarded the train and continued on to Grande Prairie.



Mr. and Mrs. Bill Belfrey, Jean Conley, Sela Watts, Donnie Belfrey on car, Chris Wright sitting.

In later years, Bill farmed wth a cat tractor and one day, wishing to bring both his car and tractor, decided the best plan was to point the tractor towards home and follow in the car, but it refused to start. The tractor ended up in the N.A.R. fence and Bill heard from the railway.

Another day, he was dragging a logging chain behind his tractor and, of course, had to go over the railway crossing to get home. The hook on the end of the chain caught a rail, then pulled free from the tractor, leaving it stretched across the track. Again, Bill heard from the railway.

Bill loved music and dancing and could play the violin and step dance at the same time. One spring, when Bill returned, he had a wife. Mrs. Belfry had been raised in B.C. but adapted well to farm life. She was very much Bill's pride and joy. A young son was born to the Belfry's but died at birth, a sad day for them.

Bill had very little formal education as he had gone to the lumber camps at a very young age. However, in his own way, he could figure in his head very accurately. He played the wheat market and was always on top of the situation.

A few years later, another son was born. The Belfry's, grew tired of hard work, so sold out and moved to Kelowna with their son. They lived there only a few years when Mrs. Belfry became ill and passed away. Bill was a lost man and moved back to Prince Albert to be with his kinfolk, where he, too, passed away.

Charles Bradley

by Irene Stoll

Charles Bradley was born on August 17, 1889, the oldest son of Jane and Seth Bradley of Bury St. Edmonds, England. In his younger days, he was employed as a groomsman. In 1910, he decided to try his luck in Canada. Obtaining passage on a cattle boat, he arrived in Canada. Later he found work as a farm hand in Ontario. He stayed there for a few years, before heading west as far as Rouleau, Sask. There he met and married Sarah Keyworth, who had also come from England in about 1913. In 1921, I was born.

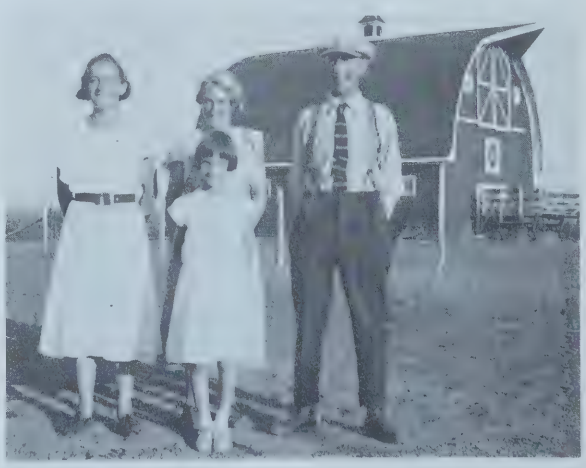
In 1926-27, the Peace River country was getting a big build up, so Dad decided to try his luck at homesteading. In early April of 1927, we arrived in Grande Prairie, after a gruelling three day ride on the train. Dad was employed by Walter Roberts of Bear Lake, as a farm hand.

One of the recollections I have, of this time was fishing in Bear Lake and being able to fill a wash tub with lovely big Jackfish. Just as fast as you could unhook the line, and throw it back, you had another fish. After the seasons work, Dad moved Mother and I to the town of Wembley, where we stayed with Mrs. Sinclair, the postmistress and Dad went homestead hunting to Pouce Coupe, Dawson Creek and lots of other places. But he did not find anything to his liking. In the meantime Mother was employed by Mrs. Harrold as a seamstress.

The following spring, we went to work for the Richards Estate. It was from here that I started school with Miss Rhea McLean, as my teacher. I was not very pleased with the idea of having to stay at school, so I kicked the teacher in the shins. She used to remind me of this in later years, whenever we met.

In the spring of 1929, we went to the Wallace Edgar farm. The house was a log building with a sod roof, and when it rained, it rained just as hard inside as out. In July, my sister Mabel was born.

The next year, we moved to the Jimmy James' farm near Grande Prairie, and I went to the Percy School. Times were getting pretty hard about this time, so after the season's work, Dad located some empty farm buildings belonging to Fred Frewer of Lake Saskatoon, and there we stayed for about five years, with Dad working for Milton White in the summer and cutting fire wood for $1.00 per load in the winter time, or doing chores for some farmer while they went to Grande Prairie to curl.



From left to right: Irene, Cissy, Charlie, Mabel in front of Konshak yard.

In the fall of 1936, we moved to the farm of R. Currie, south of Wembley, while Mr. Currie took a holiday to United States. From there my Father purchased a quarter of land originally homesteaded by Glen Van Schaick and started farming on his own. I remember him having a number of pigs with the pigpen running down to the muskeg and the pheasants used to come in and eat out of the pig troughs.

Dad's health had not been good in later years and he made several trips to Edmonton to try and determine what was wrong. In September of 1943 he passed away suddenly, while running a binder for Paul Schmidt. Mother and Mabel moved into Wembley the following spring and then to Grande Prairie where Mother lived to the age of 82.

Mabel married Ken Tissington and had one son Terry. I married Frank Stoll and we have a daughter Joan, who lives on the farm at Rio Grande. She is married to Charlie White.

The Boyd Browns Family

by Ken Browns

On a nice spring day in 1927, Boyd Clarence Browns with his young wife, Gladys May, stepped off the N.A.R. train coach in Grande Prairie, with its board sidewalks and geese walking the streets. The new brick Donald Hotel ended their travelling honeymoon. They had been married in November 1926 in Drumheller, Alberta, in the presence of the McDowell family and friends, and then left for their honeymoon. They visited with Boyd's folks near Murray, Iowa who were enroute to South America. After about three months of mixed farming, the family decided to come back to Canada, with the idea of building or buying a hotel in Kinuso, Alberta. Seeing the spring mud there, and the old-looking places, they got back on the train to check out stories heard about the great Grande Prairie.

Grande Prairie was new and busy. People were friendly, land was good as far as the eye could see and low priced, and a new railroad went as far west as Hythe, and was planned to go farther. The hotel idea would have to wait, as land buys seemed more promising. The Ford dealer in Grande Prairie sold Boyd a nice new model T grey and black roadster for $735. Mr. Thompson sold him a farm with buildings, four and three-quarter miles southwest of Dimsdale. It was one quarter section with part slough lake and a nice building site, also 40 acres approximately two miles west. Boyd bought horses and farm equipment, and some furniture for the log house that was there to live in temporarily, as he planned on building a new, modern home.

On a very hot Sunday, August 14, 1927, Boyd and Gladys Browns proudly received their first son, me, Kenneth Earl, in the old log Grande Prairie hospital with the help of Dr. L.J. O'Brien. Mother sure never forgot the bedbugs falling from the ceiling when the nurse turned on the light as she was delivering me for night feeding.

The Browns' next child was a healthy daughter, Evelyn Fay, born February 9, 1929, in a nice new brick hospital. Then came Albert Wilbur on April 29, 1930, who, Mother said, was a very big boned boy with such a loud voice that nurses gave him attention anytime. Boyd Clarence arrived December 10, 1934. Dad was sure proud of "Bud", as Boyd Junior was nicknamed. They stopped at Belfry's to warm up on the way home in the Model T in the deep snow and cold.



Left to right: Bud, Boyd, Ken, and Bert Browns camping at Wapiti in 1936.

Dorothy Louise, born July 5, 1936, was a very happy, busy baby. In October, 1937, a very quiet baby, Margaret Virginia, (Peggy) was born to our family. Mother had to go back to the hospital after Peggy's birth, and while she was there, Peggy passed away in her sleep. Dr. Carlisle said she was weak, likely because of mother's health. I remember the look of surprise on nice young Edna Squire's face (she was looking after us), when she picked up the baby for her morning bath, and then took her on the run to Dad who was outside. He said quietly, after trying hard to revive her, "she's gone". Three days later, in the afternoon, with Mother home and some friends present, we put Peggy in a very nice little homemade coffin on the table. Mr. Floyd VanSchaick, a neighbor, read messages from the Holy Bible and we had prayers for Peggy, then carried her coffin to a newly fenced grave site about a quarter mile east of the house near trees along the slough lake. Mother planted two small spruce trees, also set out Sweet William flowers. She lies there in peace today. In 1978, the six and eight inch trees had died, also the fence was unattended. We have tried to get her moved to a cemetery with a head stone.

Mother, being a young city girl when she was married, thought living in a two-room log house with no electricity, plumbing or phone was fun and only temporary. Her dad had moved the family often during the war years from southern Alberta to his old home area and back to do his mason and tile work by contract. Because of his work, the family always got to live in nice new brick homes.

Dad said they should get a good supply of water like the neighbors, but after drilling two dry wells, one over 400 feet, they had no luck. Then they hired a man known as Oscar to help dig two wells at the edge of the nearby slough. These were 15 feet deep, four by four, complete with tight lids, one for house water and one for stock water. Then in winter we melted snow for drinking water, and in the summer used ice. It took many days to cut and

haul blocks of nice clear ice five to ten miles, also loads of sawdust to store the ice in. We had a 12 by 16 foot icehouse, and packed in three layers of ice with sawdust, so we had the ice to melt when there was no snow. I can still feel the cold on my arms, holding a big piece of ice while Evelyn or Bert would pour a final splash of water over it to remove the last of the stubborn sawdust. It sure made the best possible water to drink.

I will always remember the very cold winter evening near Christmas when Bert, Evelyn and I were watching the wood heater turn red, and Mother was cooking supper on the wood cookstove. We just had the kerosene lamp lit since Mother did not like the danger of lighting the gas lamp herself, as it would always blaze up in fire before turning to a steady white light. It had been one of several hard days for Dad, with the problems of trying to haul two 145 bushel sleigh loads of low grade frozen wheat to Dimsdale elevator with four horses through the deep snow and cold. He wanted money to pay for a $28 Eaton's C.O.D. Christmas parcel before it would be returned by the post office.

As he was hanging up his coat that evening, Mother asked about the parcel. His answer was, "We only got a little over $26 for the wheat." Mother started to cry as she prepared the supper, saying, "Boyd, what are we going to do when two loads of wheat cannot even give a family little gifts of needed clothing?"

Then Dad said, "Remember that big coyote I shot? Also the three weasels I trapped and the squirrel? And the good grade oats at the homestead?" He suggested we all go the next day, taking along a lunch and bundles for the horses, load up the oats and take them to Wembley. Next morning was bright and clear, near minus forty. Many rocks were warmed on the heater for our feet, and wrapped in blankets, we made the long 14 mile trip. Mother, Bert and Evelyn stayed at Kranz's Department Store while Dad took me along to see the grain being unloaded at the elevator. The 40 bushes of oats brought over $7, the fur brought over $13, which bought our first box of Christmas oranges and some other treats. We drove home happily in a very cold sleigh under super bright heavens of night starts that seemed endless.

The next day, just before Christmas, Dad went horseback to the Dimsdale post office with over $28 for the C.O.D. parcel. We found out years later that the postmasters seldom returned parcels before Christmas. Santa Claus came this year with a sigh, like a breath of spring.

My first day at Wapiti old log one-room school became a reality after a long walk (nearly three miles) with my younger sister one sunny September morning in 1935. As we stood, feeling quite alone, a few feet from the school, the door opened and a kind, smiling teenager, Margorie Stoll, came out to welcome us. She took us in to meet the teacher, Miss Campbell, and told who we were, and got us enrolled on the Alberta school records.

School Christmas concerts sure became real to me. Teachers would prepare us to sing carols and give us lines to memorize for plays. Then, the evening of the last school day before Christmas holidays, our parents would fill the class room. We would get applause for doing our parts. The suspense of the evening was exciting. There was the hissing of the lamplight, and someone saying Santa Claus was coming soon, and hearing the sleigh bells coming closer and closer, and stop outside. Then through the door would come a real live Santa Clause, Ho! Ho! Ho! running in in his red suit and shining black boots with a big bag of toys over his back. He fussed over everyone, giving each a gift and a nice bag of candy, nuts and popcorn balls from under the decorated Christmas tree. Then with friendly cheers and goodbyes, Santa ran away to his sleigh, and the bells faded away into silence for another year. It was years later that I found out that our jolly St. Nick was no other than Mr. Soren Fredrickson.

One spring the west wind blew soil and seeds from the fields like snow. In order to keep from breathing dust while walking the three miles to school, the Macauley family showed us how to cover our faces with our handkerchiefs. Cars even got stuck in the sand like in snow drifts.

Bert, Evelyn and I were sent one morning to Mr. and Mrs. Cowell's to buy butter, with very stern orders to come right back or expect trouble. It was a sunny hot morning for this more than three miles walk. When we got there, Mrs. Cowell had not finished making the butter and we had to wait. We hurried home as fast as we could, but the heavy hand of parental law awaited us from both parents. This surprised and really hurt us, as we could always count on one parent to protect us.

Harvest time was always exciting to me, the autumn colors and the smell of cool fall weather coming from the white-capped Rocky Mountains along the southwestern sky line.

The last fall I was home, Mr. Herman Uswell's threshing outfit was trying to finish up our harvesting.



Boyd's Model T Roadster.
Left to right: Evelyn, Boyd, Ken and Bert with Bob Durston in back.

Being 14 years old, I enjoyed helping the teamsters load bundles. The men enjoyed a quick lunch break and with the weather so nice, decided to go on into the evening darkness. I was asked to help shovel the wheat back in the double-sized granary. The outfit was really putting out, and I became exhausted and slowed down. This would plug the grain spout, causing short shut-downs. However, I lasted till the end, and had the wheat pushed up tight to the peak of the roof. As the tired men and horses finished, some went home instead of staying for the late supper. In the morning, foul weather ended threshing time for that year, and the threshing machine was moved only after the wet field was frozen.

Since they believed good family housing was a must, Dad and Mother decided to build new buildings about a quarter mile east pending on getting first a good well. Dad felt secure with his cash tied up in wheat future and no debts.

He had been paying for years the shortages on his wheat futures due to a banker's advice. Then came the decision which way to go - lose what you have or borrow to protect your investments. He was advised to borrow from the local bank in the early thirties. It proved the wrong decision and he lost out. I understand he signed a quit claim over to the Bank after harvest in 1941.

Instead of building, Dad and Mother decided to move. They planned a June auction sale, with auctioneer Barney Hogg, Sr. The sale was rained out and Dad sold what he could to neighbors and friends, then loaded the rest on two wagons. One was loaded with a McCormick Deering binder on a new 7 by 16 hayrack. I drove one team, he the other. We were heading for Aeroplane Flats, B.C. The first night we camped out at the south side of Beaverlodge by a creek. It was a slow 20 miles per day, depending on water from creeks for ourselves and the horses. We went west from Dawson Creek to the East Pine ferry, and on to Mr. and Mrs. Phil Esswein's Aeroplane Flats, with nice large log buildings and a guide business, also a registered B.C. trapline which Dad had agreed to buy from Esswein. On the 14th day, with only one corner left on the hayrack, and four river crossings behind us, Mr. Esswein helped us tie the hind wheel with chains in order to go down the last big hill near dark. I stayed at Essweins with the stuff and Dad returned home.

Neighbors and friends had been good to Mother while Dad was gone. He was happy, and a short time later had loaded up Mr. Nick Schneider's coal truck and his own model T with the special crate on the running board for the dog. There were many goodbyes, and good lucks, and a bit of pocket cash from items sold, and they left our Dimsdale home. Near dark that day they arrived at Aeroplane Flats totally exhausted - Dad, Mother, brothers and sisters, leading the milk cow and a yearling, ending their long tiring day with a four hour walk on a bush path.

Dad had to return to help take off his crops with some arrangements with Mr. Bill Belfry. It proved to be a very trying year to get crops harvested due to so much wet unsettled weather. There was also the harvest to attend to in the new place. We got the crop all in while he was gone by re-stooking wet bundles a number of times, and bringing in a load when possible between rains.

I still like travelling the Grande Prairie area, also realize the beauty of it, and the friendly people trying to make new homes. Our parents saw and felt the opportunities of those early times.

The Thomas H. Brumpton Family

Thomas H. Brumpton was born May 14, 1877 in England, where he worked on farm estates until World War I. During the war he served both in France and India. After the war he went home to England and worked in the iron and steel mills, as a blast furnace man. On December 6, 1919, Tom married Ellen Gertrude Eyre. Ellen was born May 4, 1887. Since she came from a family of 15 children, she was kept busy helping take care of her brothers and sisters and, later, her nieces and nephews.

The Brumpton's first child, a boy John, was born February 23, 1922, but died at birth. While still in England their second child, Doreen Mary, was born February 8, 1923.

In 1925, Tom, Ellen, and baby Mary set out for Canada crossing the Atlantic by ship and then boarding the train to come west. They first worked in the Bad Heart and Sexsmith area. In 1926 they received their half-section of Soldier Settlement land SE 6-71-7-W6 and NW 31-70-7-W6 in the Dimsdale area.

They moved into their two storey, log house, which was their home for many years. After they moved onto their farm they built a barn. The land was broke using horses. Tom never had a tractor; all the time he farmed he used horses. On their farm they raised cattle, horses, pigs, poultry, and a few sheep now and then. Tom was noted for his good crops and gardens. He enjoyed gardening and berry picking. There were times when he would bring so many milk pails of berries home that Ellen would have to give some to neighbors so they would not spoil before she could can them. After they moved to the farm, Elizabeth (Betty) Ellen was born, October 1, 1927, completing their family.



Tom and Ellen Brumpton.

Ellen was very active in the community and was a member of the Millarston W.I. Sunday School was held in their home when weather permitted. Their home was usually filled with neighborhood children and friends. Their house was open to any passer-by who needed a place to stay or a meal. Ellen was very resourceful at using what was available. Their cellar was always filled with vegetables and canning. Ellen at times cooked for the Don Noyes' threshing crew using the facilities of his portable cook house.



Betty and Mary Brumpton.

Tom and Ellen sold their home quarter to Don Noyes and moved to their south quarter for a time. In 1954 they sold the south quarter to Stanley Kasprow. This land was later bought by Van Schaick's who now farm it. Tom and Ellen then moved to Grande Prairie.

When Tom and Ellen moved to Grande Prairie, Tom missed the privacy of the farm and his big garden plot. He always enjoyed the weekly hockey games and when they purchased a TV he enjoyed them even more. Tom passed away on July 1, 1963.

After Tom passed away Ellen spent some time with her daughter, Betty, and son-in-law, Don MacAlister, on their farm south of Wembley. Then she went back to her home in Grande Prairie for several years. Ellen kept busy with needle work and was visited frequently by her many friends and family. When Ellen's health prevented her from staying alone she again went back to Don and Betty's home. Ellen's grandchildren always enjoyed what time they spent with her. Ellen passed away September 19, 1974.

Doreen Mary Brumptom went to school at Millarston. After Mary finished school she worked as a practical nurse. She married David Pete Galatiuk, April 28, 1946, and moved to Dawson Creek, B.C. They had three children. Garry David was born June 29, 1952, is now married, with three children, and lives at Campbell River, B.C. Garry drives truck. Cheryl Lynn born April 9, 1957. She now lives in Grande Prairie, with her daughter Stacy. Sandi Doreen was born February 16, 1960. She is also living in Grande Prairie and works as a secretary at Borstad Welding. Mary moved to Central Alberta sometime ago and farms. Her husband, Dave Galatiuk, passed away January 5, 1975.

Elizabeth (Betty) Brumpton married Donald Edgar MacAlister April 27, 1949, and now lives at Pipestone Creek. They have five children, Donald Hunter, Ellen Susan, Elizabeth Gail, Bonnie Kathleen and Lisa Louise.

William Nelson Card and Family

by Frances Linden

William Card was born in Pennsylvania, in the year 1869. Before the turn of the century, he married Elizabeth Ballantyne from Ontario. She was born May 24, 1879. The couple migrated to Maymont, Saskatchewan. Here they farmed for a few years before heading across the Edson Trail in 1909. With them they took daughters, Minerva (age 9), Frances (age 2) and son Nelson (baby). By 1911, they reached Grande Prairie, with no hardships, but the loss of one cow. They were much luckier than most.

Being fully impressed with the look of the land, father filed for the half section N½8-71-7-W6, which was where the Wapiti School was later situated. Father farmed this



Left to right: Bill Card with Frances, Mrs. Card, Nels and Minerva (standing).



Frances, Nels, Bill and Lydia Card.

land for six years, before he sold out and moved us all to Kelowna, B.C. By this time, two more children had been added to our family, a daughter, Lydia, who is living in New Westminster, B.C. now, and a son, William, who is living in Kelowna, B.C.

After two years, father decided we should move again, except Minerva, who married and stayed in Kelowna, up to her death in 1973. Back in northern Alberta, father rented land and worked for other farmers around the Grande Prairie district. In this time, my sister Hilda was born. Hilda passed away in 1971. She also had lived mostly in Kelowna, B.C. but made many trips back to visit us. She never married. My brother Earl was born when we lived in the Flying Shot district. He died as an infant in 1920.

At the time of his death, my father, had homestead on a quarter, which is where the Proctor and Gamble Mill is now. Father died in January, 1935 at the age of 66. Mother moved back to Kelowna and died there, January 11, 1949 at the age of 70. My brother Nelson went back to Kelowna and has spent most of his life in B.C. I was the only one who stayed and I married G.A. (Tony) Linden and we are still here.

Percival Ulysses Clubine

by Frank Stoll

Percival Ulysses Clubine grew up in Ontario, the son of a wholesaler. He realized a dream travelling over the Edson Trail with George Jebb by ox team, arriving about July 31, 1911. He filed on NW 20-70-7-W6 and built a log cabin. He broke some land that first year, with the addition of a neighbor's ox team along with his own. Returning to Edson that winter, he met and married Louise Ethel Smith, his sweetheart from Toronto.

Together, they returned to the homestead bringing a walking plow, harrows, and other necessary equipment with which to farm. Percy Clubine, a believer in growing good crops, soon established himself as a grower of good seed, and one year produced an average in excess of 182 bushels of oats per acre on an 18 acre plot. He also grew forage seed crops as well as field peas. He entered many exhibitions and fairs with his seeds and at one time was known as the World Pea King.

Being a community-minded person, he served on many boards and committees, such as school and church, and was a founding member-director of the Peace River Seed Growers Association, along with Robert Cochrane, William Grearson, Martin Anderson and others.

About the year 1930, he purchased the school section adjacent to his homestead. It was all raw land, mostly prairie, the Gabler brothers were hired to clear the patches of brush, and Percy bought his first John Deere tractor and breaking plow. He also bought his own thresher, binder, etc. I can remember my Aunt Lou in the busy harvest season hitching eight horses to a buggy and taking them to the field twice a day to be exchanged for the eight tired horses from the two binders.

Many crops of pedigreed seed were grown on this land, the main crops being oats and western rye grass, although registered wheat and field peas became quite popular on his farm, too. He was one of the early producers of fescue seed and in those days before the combine, it was threshed and stooked. Quite often the peas were threshed by hand flail, so as not to crack them and render them useless for seed.

Uncle Percy established a herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle about 1913, hazing them in over the Edson Trail, with a team and load of camp supplies leading the way. He followed on foot, with his dog, to keep them on the trail. Many herds of black cattle in this area were begun from the Clubine blacks.



Percy and Louise Clubine in their buggy.

A Percheron stallion was also purchased in those early years and for many years, any neighboring white horse could be traced back to this stallion as an ancestor. One incident concerning this horse, the pride and joy of Uncle Percy, happened one Halloween night. He became harnessed with a painted-on pine tar harness over his nice white coat, by J.L. McIntosh and Lewis Hawkes, who remained unknown to him, I think, to his dying day.

On November 21, 1936, when returning from Saturday night shopping in Grande Prairie, the lights failed on their car. They decided to return and have them repaired, and in the process, Aunt Lou suddenly passed away. There were no children born from this marriage.

About two years later, Uncle Percy married Hazel Cooke who had been a friend in earlier years. They continued to farm until 1952, when they sold to C.D. Foster and bought the Housworth land where the Elks Hall now stands. Uncle Percy continued to be active in the community until he passed away in 1958. Hazel followed in 1962.

Ernie and Nettie Cowell

by Myrtle Wagner

Ernie Wesley Cowell married Nettie Haugen in Norwood, Iowa, in 1903, where they lived until the first three children were born, Emeline, Koreen and Lawrence.

In 1909, they came to Canada and homesteaded at Enchant, Alberta. The first years went well, and they built a nice new home. Another daughter, Myrtle, was born in 1916. Then came the drought and when the wind blew, it was like a blizzard with flying sand and tumble weeds, which caught in the fences and made huge drifts. Trying to hang on and hoping for rain, Nettie went to cook at Vauxhall where they were putting in irrigation ditches.

Then the Cowells decided to try Biggar, Saskatchewan, where Ernie's dad and family lived. The three girls went by train and Ernie, Nettie and Lawrence went with wagons, loaded down with their worldly goods. The trip took a month from Enchant to Biggar, where they took over Grandpa Cowell's farm as he was retiring. The winters were cold and crops poor.

Emeline had corresponded with a friend at High Prairie and got some information on the Peace River country. When Emeline married Clarence Colton in 1926, they moved to High Prairie. In 1928, her dad went to look the Peace country over, his main concern was land with no rocks, but after living on the prairies, didn't look too kindly on the brush homesteads available.

Assured of a job with Mr. Stephen, south of Dimsdale, he returned to Biggar, Saskatchewan and loaded a boxcar with horses, equipment and household effects. A neighbor, Bill Johnstone came along this time to help with the stock. Nettie, Koreen and Myrtle came by train. Koreen stopped off at High Prairie and that fall, she married Bill Keay of High Prairie. She had one daughter, Mildred.

The rest went on to Dimsdale, where Nettie cooked for the harvesters for Mr. Stephen. After the fall work, they had to have a place to live, so rented the buildings on the Meyers place, two miles south of Mr. Stephens. There were two houses with a well between and surrounded by the most beautiful pines.

Bill Johnstone helped Ernie and Nettie to make the houses livable. Ernie made a deal with Bill Mitchell for a milk cow and they moved in. Bill Johnstone returned to

Saskatchewan, loaded his belongings on a box car and arrived back with his wife, son Irvin and daughter Emma before Christmas. By this time Lawrence had rejoined the family.

That winter the men took the horses and worked for the Buffalo Lake Lumber Mill. It was a real fun time for Myrtle and Emma, as there was no school. They played with paper dolls cut from old catologues and played cards with older folks in the evenings, but still missed the big Saskatchewan snow drifts.

In the spring, they rented the buildings on Knowle's farm north of Dimsdale and Myrtle went to Hermit Lake school. Bill Johnstone and family had enough of the Peace Country and went back to Saskatchewan. Lawrence got a job with Calvin Campbell and Emeline, her husband Clarence and daughter Shirley moved down from High Prairie.

That summer Ernie and Clarence took on breaking with their horses. One job took them to Elmworth to break for Mr. Brewer. Clarence bought a farm from Mr. Oakford. They also did some road work with their horses, putting in a fill over the creek by the Greentree farm. Emeline was cook for the crew and followed in a bunk house. Nettie looked after the home place and raised a garden and chickens. After harvest, Emeline, Clarence and daughter moved to their farm (the Oakford place) at Elmworth.

Lawrence worked for the Buffalo Lakes Lumber Mill in winter and for Calvin Campbell in spring, summer and fall. In the summer of 1930, he married the Wapiti School teacher, Dorothy Grey, and that fall rented a farm in the East Kleskun district where he farmed and trucked for many years.



Ernie and Nettie Cowell by their home at Dimsdale.

Ernie, Nettie and Myrtle also moved to East Kleskun in 1930 to the Jim Storm farm and Myrtle attended East Kleskun School.

When Bill Keay, Lawrence's brother-in-law retired, Lawrence and Dorothy bought his farm near High Prairie and moved up there. They had five children, Evelyn, Kay, Arnold, Heather, and Sandra. Lawrence passed away in 1976 and Dorothy in 1978.

In the spring of 1932, Ernie and Nettie moved to the Linton farm south of Dimsdale where Myrtle attended the Wapiti School for one term. In 1935, she married Gordon Wagner and they moved to a homestead west of Olds. They have three children, Barbara, Myrna and Larry.

In the summer of 1939, Emeline, Clarence and family moved back to High Prairie with Ernie and Nettie, to help with the farm work and truck. That fall Clarence got sick and passed away. Two years later, Emeline through perseverance and work, obtained the little Novelty Store, which she eventually turned into a Robinson store. In 1969, she sold the store and retired, but still lives in High Prairie.

Ernie and Nettie bought the Ralph Johnston farm east of Dimsdale. They eventually retired and moved to High Prairie, where they lived until they passed away, Ernie in 1954 and Nettie in 1967.

Alexander Craig

Alexander Craig was born in Marykirk, Kincardinshire, Scotland, on October 8, 1883. He was one of the very early settlers in the Peace River country, along with brothers, Bill and Dave. They left Scotland in 1908, stopping to work in Edmonton on the Grand Trunk Railway, the telegraph line and for Pat Burn's packing plant. They also helped build the power house before continuing the long trek to the Grande Prairie area in 1910.

The Craig brothers took up three quarters section of land south of Lake Saskatoon (S½ 24-71-8-W6 and SW¼ 19-71-7-W6). Dave took ill and died of pneumonia while they were still living in a tent. Another brother, Jim and family came to this area in the early thirties.

Alex always took an active part in the building of his community. He was an early Justice of the Peace for many years, a worker for the United Farmers of Alberta, and helped with agricultural fairs at Lake Saskatoon. These fairs lasted a couple of days, so plenty of food was taken to feed their families. The milk cows were taken along behind the wagons.

The Craig farm grew from those tent days to a good looking farmstead with Clydesdale horses and Shorthorn cattle.

Many people in the district will remember the Big Seven steam threshing machine which operated from 1917 to 1934. The company of the Big Seven was formed in 1917 by seven farmers near the town of what is now Wembley. They were Alex and Bill Craig, Ross Beatty, Alex Muir, Gordon Cox, Bill Watson and Omar Stuart. Their purpose was to purchase a threshing machine and steam engine to thresh their grain.

In the 1920's, they had a sawmill south of Dimsdale on the bank of the Wapiti River and sawed lumber for a few years. The company broke up later and the remaining shareholders were Ross Beatty and the Craig brothers.



Alex and Johan Craig on their wedding day, June 28, 1927.

They threshed until the mid thirties and then dealt off the machine.

Alex and Bill batched together until 1927, when Alex married Mrs. Johan Kennedy, whose husband, Duncan, had died two years previously.

Alex found himself with a ready made family - Isobel, Jack and Robert. Alex and Johan were married in Wembley on June 28, 1927, by Rev. Robert Simons, witnessed by James Smith and Mona Stephenson. The honeymoon was spent in Calgary, the children being cared for by Mrs. Alex Ross on their farm nearby. Six year old Rob had to be rescued from the Ross' dam when he decided to float out on a piece of wood and found that he couldn't get back. Mrs. Ross waded out and pulled him to safety.

Alex retained the SW¼ 19-71-7-W6 while Bill continued to farm the half section to the west until he married and later moved to Wembley. Alex bought the SE¼ 19-71-7-W6 from Bill Katz and farmed his half section and also the half section owned by Johan (N½ 19-71-7-W6).

They lived in the frame house built by Duncan Kennedy on the northeast quarter. Alex built an extra bedroom over the kitchen which had originally been a lean-to attached to the rest of the house.

The Kennedy children attended the Hermit Lake School, two miles north on the corner of William Grant's land. Their usual means of transportation was by horse and buggy, with Jack taking the reins. He remembers that Isobel (Toots) was rather a sleepy head and many a morning would see him and Rob waiting with the horse and buggy while she struggled to get ready for school. They didn't always wait at the door though - but at the end of the lane and she would have to run to catch up.

During the thirties, the farm manned a ball team called the "Bridgebank Bulls". The team consisted of the hired men and neighbors as well as Jack and Rob.

Alex, being an enthusiastic cattle man, raised a good herd of registered Shorthorns and also a large flock of Barred Rock chickens. Field days were often held at Bridgebank Stock Farm. Some very fine cattle were exhibited and Jack was very proud to have his calf rated first prize in 1934.

Alex sold the cattle during the war, as it was difficult to get help. Rob joined the Royal Canadian Engineers in 1940 and Jack joined the Artillery in 1941.

On June 3, 1944, Isobel married Alfred Bayer. Rev. C.G. Kitney performed the ceremony at the United Church manse in Grande Prairie. Vera and Andy Brown were the witnesses and Mr. and Mrs. Craig and Mrs. Alex Ross were guests. Mr. and Mrs. Bayer moved to Beaverlodge in 1946 and to Edmonton in 1966. They have two children, John (Kelowna, B.C.) and Barbara, (Calgary).

After the war, Rob became a mechanic. On November 23, 1948, he married Vera Pegg of Blueberry Mountain at Forbes Presbyterian Church in Grande Prairie with Rev. Davidson officiating. Rob and his family moved around between Peace River, High Prairie, and Grande Prairie, where they now live. They have three children, Patricia, (Peace River), Douglas, (High Prairie) and Donald, (Grande Prairie).

When Jack was discharged from the army, he bought the south half section from Alex through the V.L.A. Jack and Alex helped each other with harvests all through the years, until Mrs. Craig sold her half section to her daughter Isobel and her husband in the early sixties. Though retired, Alex and Mrs. Craig continued to live in the old house on the farm.

On July 31, 1953, Jack married Winnie Remnant at the Wembley United Church with Rev. Roy Chubb conducting the ceremony. Winnie, an English girl, was visiting Canada for a period of one year. However, it was ten years and three children later before she saw England again.



Left to right: Alex Ross, Jack Kennedy, Bob Mulligan (hired man). Bob Kennedy sitting.

Jack bought a small house and had it moved to the northeast quarter to be close to the Craig's. Jack and Winnie had four children, Linda (died in 1977), Brian (Edmonton), Sheila (Grande Prairie) and Stephen (at home).

The Craig's stayed on in the old farm home until Mrs. Craig passed away in 1966 and Alex in 1969. Mr. and Mrs. Craig are buried in the Lake Saskatoon cemetery.

The Crane-Williams Story

Sometime in 1928, the Norman Talbot land south of the hamlet of Dimsdale became the property of Mr. and Mrs. G.H. Crane-Williams. It was soon known as the Crane-Bill Ranch.

We must piece together the story of this couple from the following newspaper clippings gleaned from the local paper.

September 1, 1932. "The house on the Crane-Williams estate is nearing completion. Mr. Lewis has fitted up the building with a stone fireplace and, in his usual style, has turned out a splendid job in native stone."

March 9, 1933. "Mr. Crane-Williams, who recently arrived from the Orient, spoke at the Grande Prairie Board of Trade, touching on the depression. The trouble, he said, was people had gotten into a lavish way of living during the war years, and now had to come down to earth. He thought Canada should do as England, and go to pounds instead of the gold standard, as in his opinion it was the best thing England did."

March 30, 1933. "On Saturday afternoon a miniature car was seen driving along a Grande Prairie street. The owner, Mr. Crane-Williams of Dimsdale, who travelled over the world for the Austin Company, explained the workings of the mini-car to the crowd that gathered. It could make 60 miles per hour and he called it the Mighty Atom."

July 19, 1934. "The Crane-Bill Ranch was the mecca for hundreds of Masons and their families on Wednesday, as approximately 800 gathered for a picnic, with ballgames, rifle range and so on. Grande Prairie Brass and Pipe bands were in attendance."

April 4, 1935. "W.B. Godfrey, manager of the Crane-Bill Ranch returned from Europe, where he had been on holiday."

October 10, 1935. "At a meeting at the Elks Hall in Grande Prairie, G.H. Crane-Williams gave a two-hour speech entitled "World Conditions: Political Situation in Canada"."

May 2, 1940. "Fire destroyed the house on the Crane-Bill Ranch which housed the help early Friday morning, April 26. Mrs. F.H. Johnston and son, Edwin, were severly burned when forced to rush through the flames to safety. Cause of the fire is still a mystery. It totally destroyed house and contents."

February 18, 1943. "Despite exceedingly low temperatures, the Rev. G.H. Crane-Williams, itinerant Priest of the Grande Prairie Diocese of the Church of England, visited Spirit River and held both morning and evening services in St. Andrews Church on Sunday February 7. The high esteem in which Mr. Crane-Williams is held in the district was unquestionably exemplified by the exceedingly generous action of the minister of Westminster United Church in cancelling his regular services, in order to hear the Rev. Crane-Williams."

Dimsdale June 23, 1947. "For many years since Mr. and Mrs. Norman Talbot sold their farm in the Dimsdale area, the Crane-Bill Ranch has invariably suggested the genial gentleman, Rev. Crane-Williams. His versatility ran the gamut from being a charming host, an accomplished speaker, a profound scholar and an entertaining conversationalist, to the ability to build a house, or weld broken machinery. His accomplished wife could run a home, rescue a car from a burning building, or improvise a workable fish hook from a safety pin with equal facility. To the Crane-Williams we say, "Farewell and good luck," as they leave Dimsdale to make their home in Vancouver."

A little Anglican church once sat on his property. Unfortunately it burned to the ground on the very day it was to be dedicated.

Conveniences abounded on this farm. It had a water tower and complete plumbing system, and a private phone from the house to the barn, where instructions could be relayed to his workers.

A final newspaper clipping regarding the Rev. Canon George Harry Crane-Williams was dated April, 1979. It told of his death in Vancouver on April 25, at the age of 96 years.

The W. C. Dillon Family

by daughter Ruth Lamb

The Dillon family, in the winter of 1910-1911, consisted of Dad (William Carlin), Mom (Eva), my half-sister Pearl and my half-brother Ray.

In 1909 they were living near Kendrick, Idaho, where Dad was farming. During the winter of 1909 and 1910 a story was published in the "Youth's Companion" entitled "The Wheat Farm Farthest North." This was a story about the first attempts to raise grain in the then "far" north. This story so fired Dad and Ray's imaginations that Dad decided to go see for himself. In early July of 1909 Dad came to the Dimsdale district. He travelled by train to Edmonton, then by stage to Athabaska Landing, a distance of 105 miles. This took about three days. From Athabaska Landing to Grouard by boat and portages took five to six days.

At Grouard Dad met Mr. Eisenman, who was also anxious to inspect the land. They rented a team and shared expenses, going first to Peace River, then back to Spirit River. The lack of water in the Spirit River district scared Dad (although he liked the land), so they went further south into the Grande Prairie area. They inspected as far east as the Smoky, but thought there were better things to come. Coming back to Mr. Clifford's on Flying Shot Lake, they looked at the creeks running into Bear River. Finding nothing to their liking, they went west from Mr. Clifford's ending up at Frank Johnston's. At Johnston's, Dad and Mr. Eisenman got some washing done. Dad located a mile and a half south of Johnston's, while Mr. Eisenman found his choice about two miles west of Dad's selection. Now they hurried back to Grouard, where the land office was located, to file on their new homesteads. It took 13 days from the time they left Grouard till they found the land of their choice. Dad filed on six quarters, three for himself and three by proxy for Ray.

Once back in Kendrick, Dad soon disposed of the farm there. Pearl and Ray went to attend school in Spokane and by early October, Mom and Dad came to Edmonton to prepare for the trip north. Ray and Pearl joined them in early November.

After much discussion it was decided to purchase oxen to make the trip with and to use to break land. Eight head were purchased, four well-broken and four not broken. Also two six-to-eight year old cows and one sow joined the group. Oxen were chosen over horses due to them being able to sustain their strength without grain when working the land much better than horses. It was very hard to get grain until it could be grown.

These two big cows were bought to pull the caboose. The caboose was built with a lumber floor and lumber two feet up the sides, then a frame four feet high which

was covered with canvas. The dimensions were six feet wide by twelve feet long by six feet high. In the front left hand corner they put a light four-hole cook stove. The legs were taken off and it was bolted to the floor, leaving long bolts sticking up four or five inches above the stove top. Dad ran a wire around the top to keep the tea kettle on the stove when the road was rough. A good bump would send it spinning around the stove several times, shooting hot water in all directions. A shelf was put in the corner over the stove with a side on it to put the bread to raise. They had a two-foot square sliding window in front, beside the stove, with two slots for the lines where the driver could sit on a chair and drive, with the window open or closed (closed most of the time).

On the left side of the stove they had a three and a half foot table that could be raised and fastened to the wall when not in use. The two beds came about a foot from the stove. Ray slept on the outside next to the stove. That way he could sit up in bed and start the fire, then lie back down till the caboose thawed out. No fire was kept at night, so it was about five degrees warmer than outside. They had seven pairs of new wool blankets on the two beds, three on each and a Hudson Bay blanket laid lengthwise. The two springs and mattresses were fastened to the wall during the day. Blankets were folded and stacked on a board suspended from the ceiling with ropes. There was about two feet in the back right-hand corner for a small toilet and a door.

Mom and Pearl took turns driving the caboose. The one not driving did the cooking and had a small rocking chair to rest in.

Farm machinery such as a plow, disk, mower and rake were purchased, as well as what hardware they thought would be needed. Ray's load was made up of the machinery with the pig crate firmly fitted across the back of the load. The supplies and household goods were loaded on the other sleigh.

By noon on January 14, 1911, everything was ready to roll (or slide). The four mile trip to the north side of Edmonton took till 5:00 p.m. First the young lead teams were spooked by little boys driving their dogs hitched to hand sleighs. The men finally got their teams straightened out after Dad hollered at the boys to get their dogs off the street.

Then the cows decided to make a break for freedom, taking off over a foot-high sidewalk with the caboose. This landed everything that was loose on the floor, including Mom and Pearl, and stood the stove lids on edge. The second bump put them back in place. Dad caught the cows and got them tied behind his sleigh. After hanging back in their halters and stretching their necks a few times, they decided to trail along. Dad forgot he had them tied behind and turned a corner too short and caught the caboose on a house. The halter ropes broke and Dad went on down the road. Before long he realized what he had done and came back to rescue them.

January 15th. Forty below zero and the trip started in earnest. Joe Boyd, with his mother and her boys, Jim and Billy Loudfoot, travelled along with the folks a distance of 12 miles to Rye's stopping place that day. Mrs. Loudfoot had a bed in the back of one of their freight racks. The poor woman nearly froze. They were all on the trail next morning at 6:00 a.m. Mom and Pearl waked behind the caboose in the morning as Dad had hired Joe Boyd to drive the cows. Mrs. Loudfoot rode in the caboose that day. She was sitting near the blankets when the caboose hit a bump and all the blankets piled down on top of her. Mom and Pearl dug her out, but she was so angry she wouldn't speak the rest of the day.

January 18th. Clear and cold. Started at 8:00 a.m. Made four miles to Vermilion and dinner. Egges stopping place next, another 12 miles, arriving at 5:00 p.m. Drove as far as Stony Creek next day, snowing and 12 below. First time they had to double up teams on a hill. Two Creeks or McDonald's next stop.

Arrived at Lewis' stopping place at 5:00 p.m. on January 21st. Travelled about ten miles. Ten or 15 freighters came in with quite a flock of sheep. Lewis' place was at the foot of a hill. The men had to rough-lock the sleighs to get down and put the big team on the caboose. Things really got exciting for a few minutes. Knocked the raising bread off the shelf. No damage!

Mom discovered a fool proof way to make bread while travelling. She would scald some flour with the boiling potato water at noon, cool it and add the soaked yeast. This was kept warm and stirred a couple of times before night. At night it would freeze solid. In the morning it was set in a pan of warm water and thawed. Mom usually had it mixed stiff by the time the men were ready to go. Then it was raised and kneaded down a couple of times and baked at night after they stopped. They baked three times a week. Quite a procedure considering I now take about four hours from start to finish!

One morning Dad got things ready to go a little sooner than usual. The bread was still in the sponge stage and Mom was just starting to mix it, when they hit the first bump of the day, sending Mom to the floor on her behind with bread sponge all over her and the floor. Needless to say she was very angry! After that Dad made sure it was safe to start. Just think what a mess to clean up! The floor was freezing cold and enough water for clean ups was rather hard to have in the caboose as they melted snow for cooking.

Went as far as Smith's (12 miles) next day. The 23rd started out not too good! Big hill to climb leaving Smith's. Men had to double up teams on loads. They put a big team on the caboose and told Pearl to drive them. The oxen were not used to Pearl's voice and the men had taken her whip, so Mom took the lines and Pearl hurried out the door and around the side of the caboose with the broom. At seeing this sight the oxen started on the dead run, Pearl having to run her best to catch the back of the caboose. Meanwhile Mom was having much trouble getting the oxen to stay on the road. By pulling on one line with both hands she managed it and was able to get them headed in the right direction.

Drove as far as Athabaska Landing. Another long hill to get down to camp. Ray started down with one of the big teams on the caboose. As they got half way down, all that kept it from upsetting was Mom and Pearl hanging onto the high side.

January 25th. Started again at 9:30. Forty below and snowing. Just before reaching Baptiste Creek they were held up. They met Sherks and some of the "Bull Outfit", just crossing an overflow, with several oxen trailing loose. One big black got just above them and got scared. He set his legs stiff and slowly but surely slid into the side of the caboose. It didn't tip over, fortunately! By this time it was 2:30 and no dinner, so they stopped for the day. The cold snow made the sleighs pull as though they were in sand.

Forty below and clear when they left Baptiste Creek at 8:30 a.m. Had lunch out and arrived at White's at 4:30. Overtook a chap from Poland who had a homemade

sleigh. This sleigh cut off the trail very badly which made travelling very hard for everyone else. One of the cows played out next day after 12 miles of travel so they camped out on the river. Fortunately, they were in a good sheltered bend of the river. The men shovelled off some of the snow and blanketed and bedded the oxen as best they could. The river bank was covered with pine, spruce, black and white poplar and birch.

Moose Portage, a distance of 12 miles, was reached by the evening of January 30th. They had a real scare that day. Dad was walking along side of his load when he almost dropped out of sight. He had stepped in a foot wide crack in the ice. He went down far enough to get wet to his knees. The snow on top was perfectly smooth. Only made six miles next day to the "Islands." Very cold. Dawsons travelled with them.

February 1st. By now the cows' feet had gotten too sore to pull the caboose so Dad decided to put Ray's lead team on it, tying the cows behind his load. Only drove seven miles, to Mirror Landing, due to extreme cold. Sixty-three below next day so stayed in camp. Woke up with their hair frozen stiff. Men did a few repair jobs and Mom and Pearl did some baking.

February 3rd. Left Mirror Landing at 7:30 a.m. Steep hill down to river. Here Dad had a choice, 24 miles by river to Lesser Slave stopping place, or 16 miles over portage. He decided to take the river. Reached Rumble's a little after noon. Wind very strong, and roads badly drifted. Oxen very tired, so quit for the day. Rumbles had a nice log house.

February 7th. Weather beautiful, ten degrees above. Snow two to three feet deep. Roads badly built up. Three miles out of Sawridge, Ray had to leave part of his load. Arrived at 9:00 p.m. Dad decided to have part of Ray's load freighted to Grouard, a distance of 80 miles. Sawridge then consisted of two trading posts and half a dozen log cabins, mostly Indian population.

February 9th. Started to travel on Lesser Slave Lake here. Low hills on both sides. Went as far as Nine Mile Point, 12 miles. Weather mild. Drove to Swan River (now Kinuso) next day. Indian women very curious about caboose. That evening an Indian came for medicine for a sick papoose. As it turned out, he was after whiskey. When Dad told him he could not give whiskey to a baby, the Indian said it was for papoose's father! The baby died that night. The Indian women wailed all night.

Crossed Swan River first thing the morning of February 11th. Steep hill down to river. One of the oxen on the caboose had his hind feet go out from under him and he went down the hill sitting down. They passed Wapau's about 9:30, and started across the "narrows." Big Point was reached about 4:00 p.m. Shaw's Creek was end of trail for that day, 16 miles. Stayed over as one of the cows was sick. Fifty-four above! Made Cut Bank next day, 13 miles.

February 16th. They caught up to the Polish fellow, stuck tight. The only way to get round him was to shovel. After Dad and Ray got round him, they pulled him out with his promise not to get in their way again. They crossed Prairie River, then drove till dark when they unhitched from their loads. Putting a team on the caboose, Dad riding one of the oxen and driving the rest, they reached Simons' by 8:30. They brought the loads in the next day.

February 19th. Just zero. Left Simons' at 7:30. Road very narrow through heavy timber. The caboose got hung up several times. They camped at Isador's, a trapper, half a mile from Snipe Lake. Oxen had to stand out but weather warm. Dad bought 11 bales of hay for a dollar a bale from Isador.

Reached Snipe Lake at 7:30, just sunrise. Very pretty, surrounded by low timbered hills. That morning Dad wasn't paying much attention to his driving. He had the lines in one hand and the axe in the other ready to cut a water hole, when the back runners slipped off the trail. This catapulted him about six feet out into snow up to his waist. Everything got well "darned" about then. They had quite a time crossing the lake. About half way across there was open water about two feet wide and 15 feet long on each side of the road. One team went across at a time. The water boiled up like a geyser on each side. Camped out after 14 miles of travel. They finally reached the Little Smoky River at noon, February 21st. Had to rough-lock the sleighs to get down the river hill, four times, then doubled the teams on the loads going up the other side. They killed four partridges that afternoon, so had partridge on toast for breakfast.

Sturgeon Lake was reached by 5:00 p.m. next day. This was quite a little settlement. Two trading posts, Hudson Bay and Revillon Freres, Catholic Mission, school and Indian Reservation. An Australian by the name of Scotty ran one of the trading posts and helped them. They stayed at Sturgeon Lake till March 5th.

During this time Ray went back to Grouard and brought the freight that had been freighted to there. Dad started hauling what they had at Sturgeon Lake to the Big Smoky. Ed Van Horne and Art Patrick accompanied Dad but Van Horne's team played out after about two miles so he went back to Sturgeon. Scotty had an empty cabin and he told Dad to leave part of the load in it.

They were all reloaded and left Sturgeon Lake March 5th. It was seven miles across the lake, then on to Deep Creek, but no water. Sixteen miles that day. They had to double teams to get out of the creek bed next morning. Only three or four miles to the Simonette hill. It was half a mile long and very steep in places. It was noon before all the teams and loads were down; Dr. Bradford's three teams, Clendenning's and three other teams besides Dad and Ray's outfit. Quite a camp for lunch. The hills along the river reminded them of the Kendrick area. A lot of fire-killed timber. Road was good except where the two mile-long portages were. This part was badly cut up and very rough with steep pitches. They drove till 6:30, then camped. Snowed all night. They travelled on the Simonette River till 2:30, when they reached the Smoky River. Snowed all the while. Just three miles on the Smoky to Bezanson stopping place. They travelled about 15 miles that day. Mrs. Bezanson invited Mrs. Bradford, Mom and Pearl in for tea. This was the first time Mom and Pearl had black tea. They weren't too taken with it.

March 8th. Dad decided to unload some of Ray's load, as they were nearly "home." Pat Kelly, Dad and Ray and the caboose pulled out first, taking turns breaking trail. It took them all morning to get up the hill. Pearl drove one of the big teams on the caboose. On the first steep pitch, one of the oxen fell down, the caboose started to slide back, the downed ox with it and the other one backing up. Just as the caboose was about to go over the bank, the sliding ox decided he'd had enough and scrambled to his feet. Both dug their toes in, making the top. They got within a mile of Dead Horse Creek, ten or eleven miles of travel. Everyone and oxen very tired. Camped and they had to melt snow for the oxen.

About 11:00 a.m. they came to where Cap Roberts and Trembley had camped so from there on the trail was part-

ly broken to Grande Prairie, or Bear River as it was called then. Benson's ran the stopping place. The barn was full so Dad and Ray unhitched and took the oxen and cows on to Callihou's, a distance of two miles, and walked back. The roads were filled with snow again so they stayed over. Dad figured they would be "home" the next day, but Richmond Hill beat them. They left most of their load and went as far as Johnston's. Mrs. Johnston had them in for supper and they camped there.

March 12th. Dad and Ray drove the teams and walked the mile and a half each way to their place and back, to break the trail open. Snow was up to the oxen's backs. The next day Ray went back to Richmond Hill to get what had been left there. Dad took a load and Mom and Pearl had their farewell ride in the caboose. Fifty-eight long days and some 400 miles, and they were finally "HOME"!

When Dad had located, he hired Mr. Johnston to build two log cabins, a house and a barn. The house was 16 by 20 with two windows, a door and a lumber roof covered with sod. The barn was large enough for ten head of stock, with poles on the roof covered with hay and sod. The home site was situated along a creek with poplar trees in mostly park land. It took them three days to get the bedsteads and a table made, and the things moved in from the caboose.



Dillons' first home (16' x 20') in 1911. The fence was to keep the old sow out.

March 16th. Ray started back to the Smoky for the loads that had been left there and at Dead Horse Creek. He took the two largest teams. One of the oxen played out completely and Ray had to leave him near Dead Horse Creek. No one lived near there so Ray tied him to a tree, blanketed him, piled hay for him and printed a sign, with charcoal, "Please feed the ox. W.C. Dillon."

By the time Ray got back to Spring Creek, it was a raging torrent and the oxen refused to cross so Ray tied them up and fed them and walked the last two miles. He had to wade the creek so was wet nearly to his neck, tired and hungry. Next day Dad went with him and they brought that load in. They had the other load in by March 20th.

It must have been in 1914 when Dad got his first team of horses.

On August 16, 1914, my sister, Dorothy Catherine, was born, but was not well and passed away October 19, and was buried in the Spring Creek Church Cemetery.

Ray, with many other young men of the district, joined the army. He got as far as Petawawa when the armistice was signed.



Pearl Dillon 1912.

I came along, Ruth Marjorie Dillon, January 9, 1918. Pearl married Floyd South, one of the boys to come back from the war, on August 21, 1919, and they lived on a homestead two miles east and a mile and a half north of Dad's. A son, Carlin Russel, was born to them August 17, 1920.

In 1920 Dad sold the farm, but after the first payment was overdue he had to take it back. In the meantime, Mom, Dad and I went back to the States on a visit, then to Vernon, B.C. where Dad bought a ten acre plot which he turned into a fruit farm. He also kept a couple of cows and some chickens.

In 1921 Ray had a severe attack of the flu which left his right arm so he had very litle use of it. Dad, Mom and I came back to the farm to be near Ray and help him. In the spring of 1927 Dad rented the farm out and we returned to the fruit farm at Vernon. My brother, James Wright, (Jim) was born April 22. We lived there until Mom passed away, January 25, 1933. In the fall Dad sold the fruit farm and we moved back to the farm at Dimsdale.

Pearl's husband, Floyd, passed away October 4, 1934, a result of his stint overseas. Pearl and Cal Campbell, an old timer of the Hermit Lake district were married in the summer of 1936.

On November 22, 1937, I married Bill Kilgour. We had three sons. In the spring of 1943 Bill was taken ill and passed away in July.

Ray contracted the flu again and passed away on January 16, 1944 in the Grande Prairie hospital. In May of 1945, Pearl and Cal sold out and took Jim, Dad and Carlin to live in Courtenay on Vancouver Island. Dad passed away in January of 1946. Pearl followed him in November of 1966.



Left to right: Ray, Mr. Dillon, Ruth and Jim at the homestead 1934.

Carlin married a girl from Campbell River, Wilma Dinwald, one of the original families of Courtenay, B.C., in the summer of 1955. They have two children. Patsy lives in Terrace with her husband and two sons. Floyd was married in 1976 and lives near Mill Bay on Vancouver Island.

Carlin had developed multiple sclerosis before Pearl passed away and in 1967 they moved to Victoria where he could be closer to the medical teams specializing in M.S. Cal did not want to make the move, so he was settled in a nursing home where he was well cared for and stayed until his death in February of 1969. He was 97. Carlin was hospitalized in June of 1972. Wilma, his wife, works for Beautiful British Columbia Magazine.

Jim maried a Vancouver girl, Vera Woodworth, in May of 1951. They lived in Campbell River for several years, then moved to the Salmon Arm, Enderby, and Malakwa areas, then to Burton in the Arrow Lakes district, where they were till the summer of 1978 when they moved back to Campbell River. They have a family of five girls and three boys. The oldest girl, Carol, is married and lives in Cranbrook with four children. Bonny lives and works in Vancouver, not married. Lorraine is married with two children, and lives at Arrow Park. Christine has two children and lives with her husband at Burton, and Donna is married and lives in Victoria. Billy is working for his dad in their logging operation, and Pat and Chuck are still in school.

In April of 1957 I married Clyde Lamb and moved to Dawson Creek. We have a daughter, Eva, and we adopted Geraldine, whom I raised from infancy. After the boys were on their own, Clyde and the girls and I moved up the Alaska Highway. Geraldine spent two months of one summer on the Highway, working in a cafe, then she went to Vancouver where she took a hair styling and make-up course. Clyde, Eva and I spent several years in Fort Nelson, then started our own lodge at Mile 175 on the Highway. We ran that for eight years and sold out, returning to Dawson Creek where Clyde went into the backhoe business.

In the intervening years, my oldest son, Ron, married and they have three boys. They live in Saskatoon. Neil travels all over the world. Pat, the youngest, is in Dawson Creek. He is married and they have a boy and a girl. Geraldine is married, has a boy and a girl, and lives in Vernon. Eva lives out of Dawson Creek and works at the Co-op.

Clyde is now semi-retired and we spend the winters at our home in Agassiz, B.C.

John Eisenman and Descendants

by Evalyn Robertson

John Eisenman was a carpenter who moved his family many times as his work dictated. John and his wife Della came to the Peace River country, over the Edson Trail in 1911 from Bradwell, Saskatchewan. They homesteaded the SE 6-71-7-W6 and NW, NE, and SE of 5-71-7-W6. They brought a family of five boys and three girls. They were Katie, William, Roy, Elmer, Leonard, Edith, Bessie and Jack. Another daughter Laura, never came north. John and Della moved to Everett, Washington about 1921, many of the family eventually joined them. John was a rambler, he passed away at Oklahoma City, a blind man. Della lived on in Everett until she passed away in 1934.



John and Delle Eisenman.

William Eisenman

Son William and his wife Laura homesteaded in 1912 on the S½ 12-71-9-W6 near Huallen. They farmed and ran a Stopping House for people travelling through, with meals and beds, and shelter for the horses. Young people gathered at their home for social times. Their girls were Wilma, Della, Sara and Myrl. The older girls went to the Lower Beaverlodge School. They left the Peace country in 1924 and lived in Everett, Washington. They had another son born there. Bill worked in the pulp and paper mill until his death in 1946. Laura died in 1968.

Wilma married W. King. They had one daughter Jacqueline. Wilma passed away in 1965.

Della married Bill Bruitt. They had one son Donald.

Sara married Bernard Reniker. They had two girls.

Myrl married Whitey Kirby. They had one boy.

Roy Eisenman

Roy and his wife, Lizzie came to the Peace country in 1912, with their two sons, Robert and Lloyd. They farmed near Roy's brothers, also returning to Everett in 1919, where Roy worked in the paper mill too.

Katie Eisenman (Moisier)

Katie married George Mosier. They homesteaded the SE 1-71-8-W6 and the SW 6-71-7-W6. They had one daughter Marguerite (Rita). Katie later married Bill Yaden, a brakeman for the N.A.R. Katie is still living in Edmonton.

Katie's daughter Rita married Harold Anderson about 1916. Harold Anderson and Jack (Johnny) Eisenman will be remembered as enthusiastic ball players and for their contribution of music for the local dances.

Harold and Rita lived on the SW 6-71-7-W6 (the Bill George place). Their children were born there. They were Edward, Allan and Mae. Ed began his education at the Wapiti School. They later moved back to the U.S.A., where Harold died of a ruptured appendix. Rita moved back to Edmonton and raised their family there.

Rita's son Ed Anderson returned to the Peace country after high school. He worked for his uncle, Hugh Thompson, for several years, becoming a good horseman. He married Edna Pack of Beaverlodge in 1941. They had four girls and one boy. Ed served in the Armed Forces from 1942-45. The family grew up in the Ft. St. John area where Ed is remembered for his work with the Swanson and Moore Lumber Companies. He died of a heart attack in 1976.

Mae Anderson stayed in Edmonton, where she married Roy Huget. They have four children.

Allan Anderson died in infancy. He is buried in the Spring Creek Cemetery.

Elmer Eisenman

Elmer served his country in World War I, bringing home an English war bride, Winnifred. They lived on a Soldier Settlement grant, SE 6-71-7-W6. They left in 1923 for Everett, Washington. Their family Douglas, William, John, Morris, Gilbert and Mae, all still live around Everett.

Leonard Eisenman

Leonard will be remembered as an ace ball player around Lake Saskatoon. He came with his bride, Nellie, and took land, the SE and NW 7-71-7-W6 and the SW 8-71-7-W6. They later sold this land to Hugh Thompson and moved to Flying Shot and later to Grande Prairie. They left the Peace Country in 1934 and went to High River, then on to Calgary. They are now living in a Senior Citizen Rest Home at Red Deer. They raised six children, Earl, Leonard, Merle, Leslie, Stanley and Alice. The most of the family live either in Alberta or B.C.

Jack Eisenman

Jack filed on the NW 5-71-7-W6, by proxy in 1920, and in 1925 he returned to Everett where his parents were. He married Vera there and they had three girls, Molly, Janet and Joanne. All their girls are registered nurses. Jack kept in touch with the north country through Don Noyes and George Stephen at Christmas time. He still lives in Everett, Washington.

Bessie Eisenman

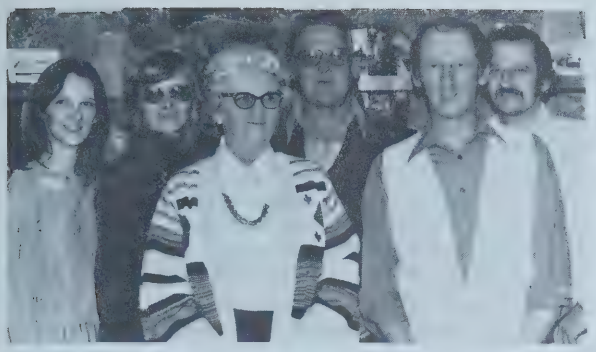
Bessie married Rowe Thompson in 1917 and they went to live east of Kleskun Hills on the SE 20-72-3-W6 which Rowe had filed on in 1914. They had a family of four, Ross, Dale, Ronald and Avis. Bessie passed away in 1944, and Rowe in 1966. Ross and wife Evaline live in Whitecourt. They had one daughter, Sharon. Dale and Phyllis bought the original home place when Rowe retired. They have two children Janice and Jim. Dale and Phyllis still have the piano that the Eisenmans brought over the Edson Trail. Ronald and Maxine have three children Rodney, Lenor and Audrey. Ron is in construction work in Calgary. Avis married Tom Turner while they were both serving in the Air Force. They have two girls Debbie and Donna.

Edith Eisenman

Edith married Carrie Francis Crill in 1915 and I, Evalyn, was born to them in Mrs. Anna Johnston's home beside Spring Lake. My parents had the SE 8-71-7-W6. My father was walking out over the Edson Trail on his way back to Saskatchewan for more supplies, as did many others in those days. On the way he became lost or ill, and passed away. He was not found for several months. My mother lived with my grandparents for awhile. My mother's younger sister Bessie was married to Rowe Thompson about this time and we moved in their yard in 1917. Here my mother became acquainted with Rowe's brother Hugh and this blossomd into another marriage for my mother. From this union was born Lawrence in



The Hugh Thompson family (1947).
Left to right: Frank, Hugh, Edith, Evelyn and Lawrence.



Left to right: Diane, Iris, Margeurite, Lawrence, Neil and David Thompson.



Hugh Thompson driving a chuck wagon with son Frank and Ed Anderson riding along.

1919, and Frank in 1926. In 1920 we moved from Kleskun Hills back to Dimsdale where Hugh had bought land from Uncle Leonard Eisenman.

Lawrence and I attended school at Wapiti until 1927. Some of the teachers I remember are Miss MacDonald, Miss Reddick and Jack McIntosh. School mates I recall are Francis and Lidia Card, Iona Harrington, Mildred Grant, Pearl, Eileen and Oliver Talbot, Edna and Erna Stokke, Jack and Frank Stoll, Walter and Jack Pickels, the J.O. Stewart boys, Margaret and Sylvia McAuley to name just a few.

Hugh Thompson was an excellent horseman. He took part in the rodeos, driving chuckwagon and chariot races. He also acted a judge at some of these affairs.

In 1927, we rented out the land at Dimsdale and moved to the Albright district. Here we bought the SE 30-72-10-W6 and made a new home there. This small farm grew to six quarters before Hugh retired in 1943. Hugh, Rowe and Ashley Thompson's father Frank H. came in over the Edson Trail. He had the SW 5-71-7-W6. Frank H. moved to Grande Prairie for some years before returning to the United States. Ashley and his wife Agnes and son Nile came in by railway in 1917 and farmed Frank's land and some other land in the Kleskun Hills before taking land in the Kleskun Hills area.

I went to school at Gimli and went to Hythe Happy Valley School to take my high school. I married Bruce Robertson in 1935. We have four children, Robert, Grace, Ross and D'Arcy. We live on the original Robertson land which was South African script in 1911. Our children are all married and live nearby.

Lawrence Thompson married Marguerite Eastman in 1940. They farmed in the Albright district until 1953, when they bought the Dimsdale land where they still reside. Lawrence has driven a school bus since 1963. They have four children, Neil, David, Iris and Diane. Neil worked for the D.O.T. as a meteorologist and weather man, for fifteen years and is now an electrician at the International Airport near Edmonton. He married Lynne Bryenton and they have three children Sam, Russel and Heather. David who married Karen Hanson, has a thriving drywall business in Grande Prairie. They have three children Dwayne, Rita and Ashley. Iris is married to Ken Laninga. They have two children David and Connie. Diane married Wes Fowler. Diane and Iris both make their homes in Grande Prairie.

Lawrence rode horseback from Dimsdale to Albright in 1927 at the age of 8 and again in 1977, 50 years later. A most unforgetable character and neighbor of those early days at Dimsdale was, Soren Fredrickson, with his everlasting sense of humor and interest in people, especially kids. He gave Lawrence his first school dinner pail, a honey pail, red with black bees all over it. He said, "I know you'll work hard, Lawrence, and you must eat".

Frank Thompson was born in Dimsdale. He took his schooling at Gimli and Beaverlodge. He was the first teacher at Grovedale, where he taught for one year. He then became a radio announcer for C.F.G.P. He later went to Lorne Green's Radio School. He married Amy Wiese and they had one daughter, Evalyn Ann. Frank is still in radio and T.V. in Vancouver and Seattle.

Soren Fredricksen

as remembered by J.S. Sutherland

Soren Fredricksen was born in Gjiseng, Denmark. He took all his schooling in Gjiseng, then joined the army and served as the King's guard for two years. He then decided to emigrate to the U.S.A.

I first met Soren Fredricksen in the winter of 1926-27. He was a bachelor and lived on the NE 7-71-7-W6. He had come to Canada from the U.S.A. in the early 1920's and worked for various farmers in the community such as J.O. Stewart, Hugh Thompson and the Norman Talbots.

He also purchased the N½ 7-71-7-W6. I went to work for Soren in the spring of 1927. He had a little old log shack with a sod roof. I remember him bumping his head frequently on said roof. In 1928-29 he built a house 16 by 28 and in the early 30's he married his housekeeper, Janet Hunter. She was a Scotch lady, and they became a great asset to the community.

Soren was a man that liked everybody, and never saw bad in anyone. He farmed quite a lot of land with horses and subsequently went to tractors. He also raised a purebred stallion and travelled him on the circuit.

Soren was a public-spirited citizen and was on the local school board and enjoyed card parties and such. He was a bit absent-minded and left his wife standing at the gate



"Hun" and Soren Frederickson going visiting, late 30's or early 40's.

(which she had gotten out of the car to open) while he drove on to Wembley.

In early 1950 he sold out his farm and moved to Grande Prairie where he enjoyed chess and driving around the country. He was very fond of children and was a friend to all young people as well as all others.

Soren passed away in the 1960's in his late 70's, Mrs. Fredricksen following a few years later passing the 90 year mark.

He was affectionately known as the "Big Dane" who lived on the hill. Soren was one of those men who left his mark in a community. He seldom swore, but had a saying "Criminy Sakes" when he got excited. Many Christmas concerts had Soren Fredricksen acting as Santa Claus, I don't know who was more happy, Soren or the kids.

The Frank Frisby Story

Frank Frisby came to the Dimsdale area in 1915, and homesteaded the NW 21-71-7-W6. The hill adjacent to this quarter was known in the earlier years as Frisby's hill. His neighbor to the west liked muskrats to eat and was known as Muskrat Smith. They both left the area in the early twenties after proving up their homesteads.

Country Life

by Mary George

Get up in the morning
Do the chores in a rush
Got to head right back
To haul out wood in the bush
Tell my brother to harness Babe
Bud don't forget the chain
This hauling out the firewood
It sure gives me a pain
Then home we come at dinner time
With some more chores to be done
We must all pitch in and do our share
It can't all be left for one
No up-to-date electricity here
But if we've plenty to eat and wood for our heat
Why should we really care
We may not really be in style
But living in the country
Is really worth your while.

Helen Giberson

by daughter Mildred Nordhagen



Helen (Giberson) and Carl Anderson (1928) standing on the bridge in Grande Prairie.

Helen Giberson was born in Florenceville, New Brunswick in 1896. She became a teacher and came out west teaching in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Helen arrived at Dimsdale by train in January, 1928 and boarded at the home of Frank Johnston near the Wapiti School. She played the piano, so was a welcome person at social functions.

On July 4, 1928, she married Carl Anderson, a carpenter and moved to a farm at Hythe, Alberta. They were married in Grande Prairie.

Mrs. Helen Anderson passed away at Hythe, August 18, 1978.

Martha Gudlaugson (Callister)

Miss Martha Gudlaugson (Callister) was the teacher at the Wapiti school from September 1 to Christmas, 1927. She was a graduate from the University of Alberta, teaching her first school. One of her first responsibilities was to chase a porcupine out of the school barn on the first day of school. The bigger boys just stood back and let her shoo it out of the door with the aid of a broom. What courage it must have taken for her to accomplish such a feat!

When she left the Wapiti school, she completed the term teaching grades one, two and three in the United Church at Wembley, for the Hillhead School District, while the two Miss McNaughts taught in the two-roomed Hillhead school.

Miss Gudlaugson taught school for about 40 years, first in the Peace River area, then in Port Alberni, B.C. where she is now retired.

The Donald Hawkes Family

by Don Hawkes

Born December 14, 1938 at Grande Prairie, Alberta, I took my schooling at the Wapiti School where my oldest brother Vernon now lives.

As with each of us, I joined the family orchestra. At the age of 12, I was playing guitar, for dances at the Dimsdale Hall.

In 1954, I worked on Commonwealth oil rig at Fort St. John, B.C., and helped Dad on the farm. In 1958, I married the former Joyce Barley of Wembley. Brother



Don Hawkes, Dimsdale farmer and racing convener for the county fair, and his nephew, jockey Marvin Miller of Grovedale, hold their newly acquired black stud, which was recently brought from Winnipeg. Don has five race horses entered in the races at the fair which starts Monday. 1969.

Wallace was best man and Joyce's sister, Glenda Hodgson, was bridesmaid. Carol Murphy was our flower girl. (When Carol got married, our daughter Janet was her flower girl and son Darrel, the ringbearer).

In 1962, Joyce and I bought my dad and mom's farm, where Jack and Lynn Barton, and Ed and Marie Martin now live. I worked in the bush during the winter months.

I was always a horse fan and used to jockey and ride roman standing when I was young. I won a big trophy in 1966 the last time there was a roman standing race in Grande Prairie. I was sponsored by Sargent Motors.

We bought our first race horses with Don and Marilyn Gilkyson in 1966-67. One of our favorites was a horse called Angel's Geono. He won nearly every time out and we still have trophies he won for us. Our nephew, Marvin Miller, was one of our jockeys and Herb McNally started with us. We have been racing horses for the past 15 years. We have raced in Grande Prairie, Williams Lake, Lethbridge, Teepee Creek, Saskatchewan and Kamloops. We also have horses in Edmonton and Calgary.

Racing has become a real family effort as we all enjoy the horses.

Over the years, we had three children, Darrell, Janet and Darcy. Darrell married a girl from Sexsmith in 1977 (Frances Fogle). They now have two children, Darren and Jennifer.

We have been active in the gymkhana club for the past ten years. The kids have all won their share of trophies. Grampa Stan gave Darrell a horse called Cherrokee and Janet a pinto called Pixie. Darrell won the horsemanship trophy in 1971 and the Intermediate in 1972 as well as trophies for other events. Janet won the junior horsemanship in 1972-73-74 and the intermediate in 1975. She was our gymkhana queen in 1976.

Darcy has been riding since he was four years old. All three started riding on old Patch. We still have him and he is 24 years old. Darcy was top PeeWee of Alberta in 1978. He has won many trophies with his horse Cherrokee. The best performance is pole-bending.

I have been active in the fair board and racing association for many years.

We moved to the Ken McIntosh farm in 1974, which is on the highway, one mile from the Dimsdale turnoff.

Lewis Hawkes Family

In the Grande Prairie district, Lewis Hawkes was called "Mr. County Fair". Certainly, he earned that title, but the Lewis and Olga Hawkes family were involved in a host of other activities since they first saw the Peace in 1927.

Lewis was born, May 4, 1902, in Percival, Saskatchewan, the youngest of a family of five boys and five girls. He was 17 when he came west from Saskatchewan to the Peace with his future brother-in-law, Jack McIntosh. He must have liked what he saw, but after a winter in the Peace, he returned to Saskatchewan. There he farmed with his brothers and worked in a hardware store. Cupid fired his accurate little arrows several years later, resulting in Lewis' marriage to Olga Dalshaug on November 22, 1926, in Saskatoon.

Remembering the Mighty Peace, Lewis and Olga returned to the Dimsdale district in early 1927 to a quarter section he bought. (Hudson Adair now lives on the quarter).

Clinton was born in October 1927 and died October 1929, at the tender age of two. Doreen was born on February 5, 1930 at the home of Ernie and Nettie Cowells, who lived in the Hermit Lake district. Mrs. Cowell was a midwife, and cared for Olga and baby Doreen, for ten days.

One year later, February 20, 1931, Vernon made his appearance in the Grande Prairie Municipal Hospital. Mrs. Hawkes recalls she stayed at J. Stephensons until the stork beckoned her and Mr. Stephenson drove her to town in his car. There was no snow.

For two years Lewis had contributed his spare time to the Wapiti School Board. Now in the depths of the great depression, Lewis and Olga, Doreen and Vernon were forced to leave their home and head for a homestead near Millarston.

The depression days were tough on Lewis and Olga and their growing family, but many of his neighbors suffered as well. The first load of wheat he sold off the homestead was number one wheat, for 19¢ a bushel, while hogs sold for $4 each.

The closest neighbors were Seath and Helen Sutherland and the winter's entertainment was card parties.

A move was then made to land just east of Sutherlands and while living there, Ethel was born at the Grande Prairie Hospital, on July 4, 1934.

The same year saw the family on the move again. They now located on the LaPlace farm somewhat west of their previous home, land now owned by Eric and Gus Stamp. It was while living here that Bill, January 2, 1935 and Wallace, June 13, 1937 were born. When Bill was born, Lewis took Olga to Wembley where she travelled by train to Grande Prairie, as the weather was very cold.

By the year 1938, Lewis and Olga could be considered excellent movers as again they moved to a homestead in Millarston. This land is now owned by Walter and Yvonne McAllister. On December 14, 1938, the family increased by one more, when Donald arrived. Olga was taken to Grande Prairie hospital by a neighbor, Bert George, who was hauling coal from Spring Creek mine to Grande Prairie. Donald was named after a Millarston teacher, Donald Caldwell, (who later joined the RCAF and became a pilot. Sadly, he was killed in a flying accident in November, 1945.)



Left to right: Lewis, Vernon, Wallace, Ethel, Donald, Doreen, Bill and Mrs. Hawkes.

Some of the family income was made by Lewis hauling coal from the Spring Creek mine to Grande Prairie with a team of horses. Many a cold and miserable trip was made by Lewis to support his growing family. Summer and fall in Millarston saw wild berries grow in abundance and Olga provided many a meal from her family from this source. Often she would walk a mile or more, pick a pot full of berries and return while Lewis tended to the children, at noon hour.

The spring of 1942 saw the family again on the move, this time to a farm in the Dimsdale area. This was the last move the family made as a unit and the children recall being very sad about leaving their home in Millarston. Little four year old Donald, neglected while everyone was busy with the unpacking, inquired, "When are we going home?"

The move to their Dimsdale home, (now owned by Barton and Martin), also meant changing schools for the Hawkes children. Wapiti school was where all the family received most of their grade school education. Many a wild and hectic ride was experienced by all the kids in their travels to and from school, a trip of nearly two miles, usually made by saddle horse or sleigh and cutter, walking or skating.

The year 1944 was a memorable one in the Hawkes household. That year heralded the beginning of the Hawkes' Orchestra, with Lewis, the leader, on the violin and Doreen playing piano. The following year saw Vernon, Ethel and Bill join the family band. Many a community hall in the South Peace echoed to the sound of the old time dance music of this self-taught family. The children grew up and began to disperse around the country and the family orchestra finally quit after supplying many, many hours of entertainment.



Wallace, Vernon and Donald Hawkes practicing for orchestra.

The year 1949, June 28, to be precise, was another happy time for the family, as baby Earl arrived. Ethel recalls being rather sad after this event as she was certain she would get a baby sister. Doreen had some consolation, as she was married and had her first daughter, Joan, three months previous.

Lewis and Olga sold their family farm in 1962 to son Don and moved to 9506 104 Ave. Grande Prairie. Lewis remained active in town until poor health overcame him and he passed away, May 10, 1972. Olga still lives in their Grande Prairie home.

In retrospect, Lewis and Olga shouldered up to their responsibilities in the community, continually working to make it a better place to live. Olga was known for her great devotion to her husband and family, and never did she back down from a job, good or bad. Never noted for his tact, Lewis admitted, "I guess I am a little outspoken". However, this characteristic enabled Lewis to contribute very substantially to the success of this community. He was active on the Wapiti School board in 1929, and was Secretary-Treasurer of the Millarston School from 1934-42. He spent nine years as a livestock shipper and three years as a director of the Farmer's Union. He was President of the Bear Lake Telephone Mutual and served three years on the divisional school board. He was a member of the first county council on which he served from 1951-57 and was chairman in 1954. He spent nearly 20 years as an active member of the County Agricultural Society and was appointed a life member in 1969. In 1963, he became Secretary Manager of the Agricultural Society, a position he held until his official retirement in 1970. He was also Secretary Manager of the Grande Prairie Breeders Association from 1963 to 1971. He was posthumously honoured in 1973 when the Lewis Hawkes Pavilion on the Fair Grounds was named after him in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Agricultural Society.

Following is a brief resume of the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Lewis and Olga Hawkes.

CLINTON - born October, 1927, passed away October, 1929.

DOREEN (John) Miller - John is employed with N.C.F.I., and they reside in Grovedale. Doreen is active with her band, Miller's Cave. They have five children, Joan, Marvin, Marilyn, Howard and Gerald. Joan is married to Ron Caine and they have one girl, Allison. Ron is employed with the County Agricultural Society as Secretary Manager. Marvin is married to the former Peggy Freiss. They reside in Winnipeg and have two children, Carrie and Jim. Marilyn, (Rex Sterling) lives in Grande Prairie. Rex is employed with Foster Seeds. John and Doreen have two more boys, Howard in Edmonton and Gerald, who lives at home.

VERNON (Caroline) Hawkes - They own and farm the old Wapiti School quarter. Their children are: Wayne, graduating soon from University of Calgary in Scientific Economics with his Masters, Gary, soon to be married and relocating to Calgary, and the girls, Karen and Sandra, students who have honor averages, and are tremendous singers and athletes.

ETHEL (Gordon) Badger - Gordon is employed at the Alberta Wheat Pool#2 as manager in Grande Prairie and has been very active in the Agricultural Society as President since 1974. Ethel has held every position in the Gymkhana Club, except the Presidency, "and I'm not taking that for sure", she says. They have three children, Maureen (Ray) Randall who have a son, Terry. Audie is employed at the Wheat Pool and enjoys playing softball for Marcy & Wiens. Shelly is employed at a Life Insurance firm.

BILL (Jo) Hawkes - living in Takaka, New Zealand, is employed by an oil company. He has one daughter Elaine, from a previous marriage, who resides in Edmonton, and two others, Robby and Fiona.

WALLACE (Corrinne) Hawkes - He was killed in an industrial accident, June, 1962. They have three children, Clinton, Clayton and Cheryl.

DONALD Hawkes - He is married to the former Joyce Barley of Wembley. They farm in Dimsdale and the whole family are avid racehorse owners and fans. They have three children, Darrell, married to Fran Fogle of Teepee Creek, who have a son Darren. Janet and Darcy, are students, living at home. Darcy is a great horseman in his own right and was PeeWee Provincial Gymkhana Champion in 1977.

EARL (Sandra) Hawkes - is employed with Canadian Hunter Oil of Calgary. They have two children, Christopher and Erin.

The Alf Head Family

by Mrs. Martha Head

In 1961 Alf Head bought the home place from George and Gladys Stephen, S½ 3-71-7-W6, located just south of Dimsdale. He and his wife, Martha, and their five daughters, Velvet, Valerie, Victoria, Virginia, and Veronica moved there on September 1st of that year.

One year later, on the 20th of September, Laurie Leslie was born. It was really a big day for Alf because it was also his birthday. He took the day off from his harvesting to celebrate the blessed event.

As time went on, Alf and Martha purchased another section and a half in the area. With all this new land, there was a lot of clearing to do. Fortunately, Alf owned a D8 Caterpillar tractor and with the help of his hired man, Lloyd Massee, and good friends like Carl and Willem Linden and Dwayne Kerik, the job was accomplished. The whole family helped with the root picking and burning.

Alf introduced rapeseed to our valley. In spite of all this work, Alf still had time to take care of his cattle which he kept on his land east of Grande Prairie in the winter time. In the spring he drove them to his lease on the Smoky River and often went to check on them during the summer season. He sold his cattle in 1967.

After Lloyd left for greener pastures, Alf and Martha did the farming by themselves.

In 1972 Velvet and her husband, Wayne Davies, and family moved to the district, and from then on Alf and Wayne farmed together.

Alf also put several new buildings on the home place. With the help of a very good friend, Tony Linden, they planned and built a big shop and two big machine sheds. Alf also erected several steel bins.

Alf and Martha and family spent 17 very happy years in the community. This came to a sudden end on August 25th, 1978 when Alf passed away, but the memory lingers on.

Laurie started figure skating in Grande Prairie in 1971 with group lessons in which you learn all the fundamentals of skating. She did so well that year that we put her into private lessons the next year.

Private lessons meant getting up at five o'clock in the morning and being on the ice by six, skating until eight or eight-thirty, then on to school until four o'clock and most nights back to skate until six or seven. Margie McIntosh was very involved in skating also, so Dorothy and Ed, and Alf and I used to take turns driving the girls back and forth.

The girls were very involved in their skating, so as parents it was worth our lives to sleep in. We all did a lot of work for the Swan City Figure Skating Club. There is now a Memorial Trophy in memory of Alf for all the work he did for the club, which is presented every year to a worthy person.



Laurie Head: figure skater.

During the years that Laurie was actively involved in figure skating she won several trophies at our inter-club competitions held in various centres in the Peace country.

She also received her fifth figures, her senior bronze free skate and all her gold dancers but one.

In 1978, Laurie turned professional and taught at Sexsmith, Alberta.

The Roy Housworth Family

by Roy Housworth

My grandfather and grandmother Housworth arrived in Canada from Switzerland in 1876. The Housworth's for several generations were school teachers or Lutheran church ministers in Switzerland. My father, Adolph Housworth, was two years old when his parents arrived at the town of Magnetavan, Ontario, also a younger brother named Alfred.

In 1900, Adolph Housworth was married to May Beottger, and on their farm at Magnetavan, Caroline and Evangeline were born.

In 1906 Mother, Dad and girls moved to Wilie Bay, Saskatchewan, where Norman and I, Royal, were born. In this location, my father built up a nice home and farm, working with oxen and later with horses.

In the spring of 1913, Father and Mother Housworth moved to Cutknife, Saskatchewan.

My sister, Ruth, was born here in 1915. Three years later, my loved mother went to her eternal rest by that terrible outbreak of the "flu", as it was known by at that time.

Here at Cutknife, Saskatchewan, I received my schooling. The first two terms at school I had to sit on the edge of the platform, as there were no seat available, and the teacher taught 70 students. It was a little country school that all the children in town had to attend. It was only a mile across country to the school as there were no

surveyed roads at that time, so we just cut across the fields. Later on, a two-roomed school was built in Cutknife with two teachers.

After five years, Adolph Housworth married Elizabeth Schautz. The time seemed very long and lonesome the five years after my mother died, nobody to greet you on arriving home from school and the house seemed empty. When Dad remarried, it was so good to have a mother again. She was so good to us children, we really loved her.

In April 1930, Dad and Mother Housworth with sister, Ruth, moved to Grande Prairie, Alberta. My first trip to Grande Prairie was in 1934. I came up here to help my father build his new house, which now stands by the Elks Lodge in Grande Prairie. At that time he owned that half section. It was joining Grande Prairie town to the north and west.

In March of 1936, my two sisters and I purchased a confectionery store with lunch counter and an agency for musical instruments, in Grande Prairie.

I married Gretta (Margaret) Keenan, who came over to Canada from Ireland in 1930. She lived in Edmonton and came to Grande Prairie in December of 1938.



Roy and Gretta's first home in Grande Prairie.

In 1942 we closed up our business in Grande Prairie and moved to a rented farm north of the town. Here we did very well, but it was sold to the Soldier Settlement Board, so after World War II in 1946, we moved back into Grande Prairie.

In 1948 Bryan Housworth was born and in 1949 we took two more children into our home, Dolores and Jim. In May, 1952, we moved to Dimsdale to a farm that Mr. Crane-Williams had owned. I must now say we did find very neighborly folks here and enjoyed this community. Gretta took an active part in the community ladies club and in the community Christmas tree programs and other activities.

In 1953 we started the Dimsdale Community Sunday School. I was interested in working with young people and Sunday School long before I came to Dimsdale. In Saskatchewan I had a country Sunday School for six years, and the 14 years I was in Grande Prairie and district I was Superintendant in one Sunday School for 12 years, and two years I helped in another.

After Gretta and I were married about two years, I had a vision or a dream, that we would be operating a children's home. This was something for us to think about. I realized I always like to work with young people but never thought of a children's home. When I mentioned it to Gretta, she said "I don't know how it could be possible for me to love everybody's child." This is a very reasonable way to look at such an undertaking, but as time went on everything we did seemed to work towards that end. Not that we tried to work it out, but looking back on our life, it all fit together. Every step along life's way brought us one step closer to the birth of the Grace Children's Home.

In 1941 I first had the vision or dream that was as real as someone talking to me saying, "You are going to run a children's home." Never had this ever crossed my mind before, but from that time on everything I did in working at different jobs, education, and spiritual study, all made us better fitted for the job when the time came. Well I might say my whole life was geared to help others and try to understand that people are different in abilities, personalties, likes and dislikes, placing different values on their surroundings and homes, also on their own families.



The children in Grace Children's Home counting our three we had before the home started.

In 1955 Gretta, my wife, was placed in the Grande Prairie hospital. While she was there many cards were received, also flowers from neighbours and friends around Dimsdale and Grande Prairie. Upon coming home after some time spend in the hospital, some of her cards were left in the bedstand drawer. The lady that got into her bed after she left, found some of these cards and asked who this Mrs. Housworth was. The women in the next beds told her that we were thinking of starting a children's home at Dimsdale. Well she had two boys and was separated from her husband. When she recovered she phoned and wanted to meet with us. After we met her and her boys, she asked us if we could help them. After much thought, as we were just starting on this farm ourselves, we agreed to try and do what we could as it was a very needy case. On November 11, 1955, I went to Grande Prairie with my one ton truck and brought them out. This was the starting of the Grace Children's Home. The weather was cold and stormy, 25° below. The boys, being poorly clad for that cold weather, did not need an invitation to get in the house when we arrived home. There was

no welfare agency in town at that time so this was all done on our own, but we had faith that our Saviour would supply our needs if this is what his work was for us. As we prayed much about this, our prayers were answered. We did not send out letters or words of need; no, we have never done that, but we do pray over needs as the Bible says.

In a few days all the needs were met. The boys started to the Wapiti school, and we did what we could for the mother. We found out she was an alcoholic, so this was her trouble. She was a good accountant but was unable to hold a job. After staying with us for a couple months she got a good job in Grande Prairie. After the school term ended, she took the boys and everything seemed to be O.K. but in the meantime we had many more children arrive.

Everything went along as normal, the whole family was happy together from the start of moving to Dimsdale. We always spent a short time in the mornings and evenings for devotions for the whole family. I believe in the saying, "The family that prays together, stays together."

The spring of 1960 was a very nice season. We had the yard cleaned up, the flower boxes freshly painted, and flowers planted, looking forward for a welcome place for everyone who dropped in to visit. Instead, on April 28 about 3 p.m., Gretta was hanging out the last of her wash on the clothes line, when she smelled smoke. Thinking it was neighbours burning off grass or stubble in the fields, she never looked to see where it was burning. On her next trip to hang up more clothing she saw the smoke coming over the roof of the house, and located the fire. She went for a pail of water, but on arriving with the water she found the fire had already started to burn in the walls of the house. She immediately got on the phone and called the firehall in Grande Prairie. Mr. Leslie heard the call and came right down, and before he arrived, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Murray were driving past on the road and they came and helped the best they could. Gretta had four preschool children tucked in for the afternoon sleep. She quickly got them out and asked the neighbours to carry out my drawers in the writing desk that contained all our personal and home business. That was really good as I never lost any records of the children or of contracts. We were so thankful to God for giving her the presence of mind to do that when there were so many personal things to think about. All our wedding gifts and many cherished mementoes of many folks and friends that we had enjoyed fellowship with. I have said many times since, thinking it all over, the little poem by Edgar Guest often comes to me and goes like this:

Only one life,
It will soon be past
Only what's done for Christ, will last.



This is the first home that was destroyed by fire in April of 1960.

No truer words have ever been spoken. Everyone born into this world sometime or other has to leave it all behind, and meet his creator.

I had just left for Grande Prairie about ten minutes to three. As I arrived at the Royal Fruit Wholesale the fire alarm rang. Roger, who was waiting on me, ran over to City Hall where the fire engine was kept. He came back on the run and told me to jump into his car, as our home was on fire. I couldn't believe that, as I had just left a few minutes before. However, I got into his car and in a very few minutes were were over Richmond Hill and sure enough the smoke was really going high. The fire engine was already there. We arrived a few minutes later, and as we approached the building the front windows blew out with bellows of smoke. There was just no way that fire could be put out as the fire engines ran out of water, and they said they couldn't pump the water out of my cistern. They went to a dugout and had problems there, getting stuck in the mud and then ran out of gas. Someone ran to my tractor that was stopped in the field a short way off. In the excitement, he went to put it in gear, and if he didn't pull out the gear lever from the transmission.

When the children arrived from school, some were crying and they were all looking very sad, not knowing what was going to happen to them. Neighbours offered their help and arrangements were made for all the children to go to different neighbour's places. We had 22 children in the home at that time. Again our appreciation could not be said with words for the love and kindness of all our friends and neighbours.

Unknown to us, C.F.G.P. had made a deal with D-Company Western Command for the Officers mess hall. It was equipped with cook stove, dishes and kitchen utensils for cooking etc. Blackett and Galway covered the deal with insurance, and many people gave their services and whatever they could to help. In eight days we were supplied with beds, mattresses, covers, clothing, and all our needs were met. Then we gathered up the family from all the wonderful neighbours that had taken care of them for eight days. What a glad day that was to have them together again.

Then back to the farm, we had the crop to sow. I was milking 15 cows, and our milking machine equipment was destroyed in the fire, so they had to be milked by hand. I decided that we just had to stop milking and turn the calves on the cows. The neighbours helped us sow and prepare the ground for seeding. June 1960 was very wet so we worked on the planning of the home and at the same time spent time in prayer and waiting on the Lord. I was called by phone to meet the committee that C.F.G.P. had set up for rebuilding the home. They already had $3,000 in the jack pot. This was another complete surprise to me, as I never heard of anything going like that. Well I went over to the radio station and here were all the men, I believe, from every business that was needed to go ahead and build the home. This was beyond anything I ever expected, even after Mr. Perry telling me on the phone. I was so overcome in my spirit, I just couldn't speak for a time. In a few minutes that seemed like hours, I was standing wondering what I could say, and what I could do to show our appreciation for all this. Somehow we did get talking, and in the end made some very profitable headway to get the home well on its building program. About the first week in July the first shovelful of dirt was moved by George Stephen's caterpillar tractor driven by Doug Greentree, starting the diggings for the basement and footings.

Our home was built by all the regulations that health authorities required, and also fallout shelter instructions. Every window could be used as a fire escape with no need of ladders, as a person could jump out in safety, with the highest window sill not over seven and a half feet from the ground level. All precautions were taken for the safety of the children in the construction of this home.

To this day we have admitted over 300 children to this home, and we hope someday we will meet them all if not in this world in the Glory Land.

On April 3, 1961, the neighbours again come to our help. We were moving into the new home. That was a very hard day, but a wonderful one. We were all so thankful to God that his promise was kept, and we were going to enjoy it. This we have done for the last 20 years.

Before the home was destroyed by fire, the crops on this farm were just enough to keep us on the farm, but after 1960 the farm grew some great crops, and the cattle seemed to prosper with so many cows having twins. Ever since, this farm has produced up to par with the rest of the land around it.



Children from the grace home taken in D-Company Armories, officers' mess, living room in 1960.

Since 1960 we have continued in our usual crop rotation on the farm. Our son Bryan and his wife Anne and their two little girls have taken over the farming operation. They live on our southeast quarter just across the driveway from the home.

I am writing in March, 1980. My wife Gretta and I are still in charge of The Grace Children's Home, but our daughter Delores and husband Clifford are the home parents now. Delores was a missionary in Tiawan for seven years before coming back to help at the home.

The Dimsdale Community Sunday School is very active and a good attendance is still very much appreciated and is held in The Grace Children's Home every Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. and everybody is welcome to come and share the studies together.

I must truly say, it is a real blessing to have a full life of service knowing it was planned by God and led by the Holy Spirit. Without this faith in God, we would have failed, as natural man cannot do this in himself. I must give God that praise.

The Hudec Family

Andy and Kay Hudec, with their son, Harlie, moved from Hythe to the Crane-Bill Ranch in 1944. "Dimsdale was a wonderful district, the people were all so friendly



Mr. and Mrs. Andy Hudec.

and helpful", Andy said, "we have never lived in a district like it, before or since."

He remembers one time pulling pipes on his well which had quit working. Not wanting to impose on anyone, he was out doing this alone when a neighbour going by saw him and stopped to help. By noon there were 12 neighbours, all stopping to give a hand. Needless to say they were all invited in to dinner.

The young people of the district used to come to Hudec's house for dances; since the floor was covered with battleship linoleum, when they touched they got a real shock. This may explain all of the weddings in the district about that time!

Kay fondly remembers having a shower for Jean Leslie, who was soon to be the bride of Elwood Rooney. Being about Christmas time the young bride-to-be had to get her gifts from under the Christmas tree.

Hudec's sold the ranch after four years of life at Dimsdale and bought a farm northeast of Clairmont. A daughter, Peggy-Ann was born to them in 1950.

Andy keeps busy farming, raising a few horses and cows, and driving the school bus.

Edgar & Freda Jebb

by Edgar Jebb

I was born in England in March, 1902, one of five, four boys and one girl. My parents (Alice and George Jebb) came to Canada in 1906, with my older brother, Harry, myself and Sidney. Our first stopping place was Toronto, where my father had a store. Sidney passed away at age three.

We moved to Edmonton in 1909 where father worked at Gainer's packing plant. Then my folks, hearing of the Peace River Country decided to move again.

Father came in 1910, and filed on land which was four miles east of Wembley, near Alex Craig's and Clubine's on the highway. He returned to Edmonton to bring the family up in 1911.

We left Edmonton with a team of oxen, taking six weeks to make the trip. On the trail where we camped one night, a previous traveller on the trail had abandoned a

cook stove, probably because of a heavy load. (In those days people could leave things and return later for them.) After camping, an ox had strayed away, and while we looked for it, my mother made a batch of bread, cooking on that abandoned stove.

We lived in a tent the first winter, until a log house was built. Harry and I went to the Wapiti school from 1914 to 1917, then to Hermit Lake. We walked across country to the Wapiti school. A brother, Colin, was born in 1913 and sister, Violet, (Patterson) in 1919.

I filed on a homestead at Pipestone Creek in 1921, adjoining A.K. Watts' place. I worked at several places, working with Bill Feist in the Pool elevator in Wembley, later running the Pool elevator in Dimsdale. I then went back on the homestead for awhile.



Freda and Edgar Jebb on their 40th wedding anniversary.



Four generations of Jebbs; Edgar, his mother, son Edmund and his son Jay.

While in Dimsdale I met Freda Lewis in 1930. We were married in 1935. In 1936 our son, Edmund, was born. In 1938 another son, Ken, then a daughter Ellen, in 1940. In 1939 I joined the forces RCE and was stationed at Camp Petawawa, Ontario, going overseas in 1940 for five and a half years. Freda was living in Wembley where Edmund and Ken had started school. I returned home in 1945. We moved to Grande Prairie where I had a job.

In 1946 a son, Fred, was born and in 1948, a daughter, Joan. We lost our daughter, Ellen, in 1952, age twelve years.

We have six grandchildren, Edmund and Donna have four children living on a farm near Dimsdale. Ken lives at Grovedale, Fred and Helena have two daughters and are living in Peace River, with Joan living in Grande Prairie. We had some very hard times, but always had good neighbours and a lot of good times, such as picnics and dances, which didn't cost much in those days. We are both retired now.

The Johnston and Talbot Families

The Talbot story goes back to 1892, when Norman Talbot's parents, Henry and Anna, sisters Ida (Henderson), Lena (Thompson), Etta (Kerber), and brother Harold (Edgar died in infancy), came from Guelph, Ontario, and settled at Lacombe, Alberta.

Having heard of the Peace Country from an old friend, Oliver Hill, and the "greener pasture" picture painted by land agents, enthusiasm grew until it was finally decided to answer the call of "go north".

In January of 1910, Frank Johnston and wife Anna with their entire family of six children, and eight other people, started their long journey. The children were son Ray, with his wife, Sue, and two boys Frank and Harvey, aged three years and nine months; two other sons, Ralph and George, (age 6 years); eldest daughter, Golda (Patrick), with her husband, Art Patrick and daughter Lilian (Moore), and two single daughters, Nina and Rena. Frank Patrick (Art's brother), Norman Talbot and Ed Vanhorne completed the group.

Frank had come up the winter before with George Garnet who had already settled in the Spirit River area. Garnet had gone back to Lacombe, where he purchased a purebred bull and needing help along the trail back, arranged with Frank to load the bull and camp with them.

That spring Frank had a log cabin and log barn built near Pipestone Creek in preparation for the next spring. The area was not yet surveyed so no one could file on land parcels. Returning home, he rafted down the Peace River from Dunvegan to Peace River crossing, then by stage coach to Grouard, by side wheeler steamer across Lesser Slave Lake, down Lesser Slave River to Athabasca River and down it to Athabasca Landing. From here it was a stage coach as far as Edmonton and the last hundred miles by railroad to Lacombe.

Back home, preparations began in earnest. Frank built a caboose on sleighs for the women and children to travel and sleep in. He planned it so well that three hot meals a day could be cooked and served to 16 people. There was even a wash room at the back. Flat racks were built on the other sleighs for freighting supplies. One sleigh carried just flour.

As starting time approached, a fat steer plus two hogs were butchered and the meat wrapped and stored in sturdy wooden boxes. Several bushels of potatoes were boiled, thinly sliced and frozen, stored in heavy cotton sacks.

Six 25-pound firkins of fresh dairy butter were packed. Oats were sacked for the horses, hay to be bought from the native people who ran the stopping places along the trail. Twenty-four Plymouth Rock hens and one rooster were placed in an insulated coup built on the back of one freight sleigh, the nucleus of the chicken flock.

The only piece of furniture taken from their home was a Kingsbury piano, a heavy steel backed model that must have weighed 500 pounds. Incidentally that piano is still in the family and much in use. During those first years here it was often the centre of an evening's entertainment.

The party left Lacombe on January 21, complete with the six loads of freight and the caboose, all drawn by horses except for one team of mules belonging to Frank.

At Edmonton the party held up for a week, buying and loading a year's supply of groceries, clothing and as few hardware articles as they could get by with, such as a few windows, quantity of paraffin, some coal oil and other staples. Each one of the teamsters purchased a full length fur coat and Hudson Bay bed roll. Anna spent a week taking a short medical course from a kindly old doctor. This doctor assembled a medical chest for her. Many an early settler benefited from her knowledge and willingness to help. Frank had a veterinary chest made up.

Throughout the journey, Anna and Nina prepared the meals while the young mothers were occupied tending their babies. Nina's chore was to mix a generous quantity of bread each morning, which was baked on the move. The men had hearty appetites, driving from day break to dark in sub zero temperatures.

Four days travel from Edmonton brought the outfit to Athabasca Landing where they stopped for one day making the most of a last chance to shop in a good store.

The next morning two mounties were waiting for the party to pull down onto the Athabasca River. Every load of freight that passed this point had to be inspected for bootleg liquor. Each adult was allowed two gallons of liquor. The liquor had made more uses than one might imagine - it was standard medicine for a colicky horse.

Shortly after noon on the third day up the Athabasca, the women and children were taken from the caboose and Frank escorted them up the trail past the Machinery Rapids. Returning to the waiting loads, he advised the men on how to save themselves and the team if the ice gave way beneath the heavy loads. However, all passed over safely. Another four days travel brought them to the mouth of Lesser Slave River, where they found open water. They had to portage 16 miles to Lesser Slave Lake, well above the open rapids. Three days later the party camped at Sawridge on the east shore of Lesser Slave Lake. A strong wind was blowing from the west and Frank called for an early morning start. If the wind shifted into the northwest it would surely bring blizzard conditions. Drifting snow covered the 85 mile stretch of the lake, making travelling slow and difficult. Each team broke trail for about a half a mile then pulled aside to drop into last place. Gaily decorated dogteams flashed by making the progress seem like a snail's pace.

Half way across the Lesser Slave Lake the trail crossed the 16 mile narrows to the north shore where camp was made. By sunrise, after a camp-out night, the party was well out on the narrows. To the east appeared what seemed to be a village with many buildings, even a church and steeple. In reality, it was a massive upheaval of lake ice.

The trail skirted the north shore around the Catholic Mission at Grouard. Here the rooster succumbed to the cold, but the 24 hens survived the entire journey.

West from Grouard, a new shorter trail had been blazed crossing both East and West Prairie River and on down to Snipe Lake. This part had taken four days to travel.

Each stopping place was inspected by the young mothers. If there was a degree of cleanliness, the children were turned loose for a romp and play. Another two day's travel brought the Hudson's Bay post at Sturgeon Lake in sight. One team remained at Snipe Lake because of an injury. A soft west wind was blowing, melting the snow to puddles of water. One precious day was wasted waiting for the lame outfit to catch up, but it became apparent they could wait no longer.

One day's travel from Sturgeon Lake brought them to the dry bed of Deep Creek where they again camped. That evening, while making camp, a group of bachelor freighters were observed making their meal over a camp fire. One freighter took a bag of flour, rolled open the top, sprinkled in baking powder and salt, poured in snow water and baking drippings, stirred until "just right". This mixture was spooned into a greased fry pay placed on a bed of coals; result - bannock. With bacon, beans, syrup and tea, supper was ready. Another two were observed comparing snow water in their tea pails to see who had the greatest number of rabbit pellets. The surrounding bush was alive with the snowshoe rabbits and making tea without finding a few pellets was near impossible.

From Deep Creek, it was on to the Simonette and we wondered as we looked down that perpendicular canyon if we weren't about to earn the Indian's contempt for the white man. The five loads of freight and caboose had to be lowered to the ice below. With the back runners rough-locked to Pete and John, the mule team sitting on the breechings, Frank's load made the first descent safely. The caboose came down right side up, everything inside where it should be, as Nina had stayed inside to watch and hang on. At last the entire party was down on the ice and in short order all 16 hungry people sat down to supper.

It was with relief that the mouth of the Simonette where it joins the Smoky River was reached. Camp was made for the night with the men sleeping outside in bed rolls, and horses all blanketed.

On March 14, the loads were hauled out of the Smoky canyon. The teams had to be trebled on each load and snow shovelled onto the bare spots. All loads up on top, the party looked back down to admire the magnificent scene below. Three river canyons plainly visible, the Big Smoky, Wapiti and Simonette. Many people have admired nature's handiwork since then, but certainly not with the same feeling of accomplishment and elation. A few yards away on a bare knoll a flock of prairie chicken were performing the ritual of the mating dance. Spring had come to the Peace country.

On March 16, 1910, camp was made on Bear Creek, within sight of Bear Lake just up from where Grande Prairie now stands. The next night's camp was made on the west shore of Bear Lake. The Alex Monkmans were already living close to this area. When the menfolk filed in for breakfast the next morning, Frank was wearing a piece of green paper, pinned to his overall bib.

By sundown, that St. Patrick's day, all but the delayed team and Patricks reached Pipestone Creek and the journey's end, 42 days and 600 trail miles from Lacombe, an average of over 14 miles a day.

Life continued on at Pipestone until May 26, 1910, when a land office opened at Lake Saskatoon in the Hudson's Bay building, land agent Pete Tompkins having come up from Grouard. A scrip consisting of 320 acres cost $500, plus $25 commission. A homestead, 160 acres, cost $10. All the scrip land had been bought before leaving Lacombe, but could not be filed on until May, when surveyed. Frank Johnston filed on a South African scrip and homesteaded in the Spring Lake or Dimsdale area at that time, as did his sons, Ray and Ralph, and Norman Talbot and Ed VanHorne.

Ray Johnston farmed his scrip and homesteaded beside his father's farm until 1915, when he sold out and returned to wheat farming in Minnesota. He enlisted in the United States army in 1916 as a gunner in a machine gun corps, returning to wheat farming in 1918. Ralph farmed beside his father until 1930.

Work was divided and alloted that first summer with each person doing what they were best at. Norman's part was breaking land on each person's place with the horses and plough that had been part of the freight load. Every morning he had to round up the horses ready for the day's work. He kept a saddle horse on picket for that purpose. Pete, the mule, always loitered behind for a last bit of grass. Norman was riding bare back with only a halter. He swung the halter shank to wallop Pete, the shank took a half hitch around Pete's tail, and it was all the saddle horse could do to keep his feet with Pete running full speed. In the corral, horse and mule went round and round. When enough slack came, Norman unsnapped the halter, so Pete went round and round dragging the halter. The other men were coming out for breakfast as Norman went in, asking "how did Pete get that halter onto his tail?". Settlers loved a good joke. They could take as well as give.

Frank did the log laying on all the buildings. Ralph, Ray and Ed hauled logs from the Wapiti River. That first summer a log house with a sod roof was built on Ed VanHorne's, a log cabin on Ray Johnstons, a log cabin for W.C. Dillon and a log cabin for Norman Talbot, which boasted homemade shingles from Boyd's shingle mill.

A small chicken house was erected for those hardy hens who later provided very precious fresh eggs. The logs were chinked with mud and moss.

On April 5, 1911, Norman Talbot and Nina Johnston were married at Nina's parents house by Rev. Forbes. Bridesmaid was her sister, Rena, and best man, brother Ralph. The bride wore a traditional long, white, lace-trimmed dress from material brought in the previous year. Pearl Dillan played the wedding march on the piano. Nina's mother had hung white sheets as a back drop and made an arch way of spruce boughs. There were 16 people present and of course, everyone stayed for a wedding supper, complete with three-tiered wedding cake. Alex Monkman had issued the marriage licence as he was a Justice of the Peace at Lake Saskatoon. Nina and Norman Talbot were the second white couple to be married in the south Peace.

Norman and Nina Talbot drove with team and lumber wagon up to Spirit River for seed oats and seed potatoes the first of May 1911, driving north in two feet of water between Twin Lakes, (now Clairmont). The Twins were a wonderful swan and goose and duck hatchery. The Talbots camped on the banks of the Burnt River over night and slept in blankets under their wagon. They referred to the trip to Spirit River as their "honeymoon", the blanket bed on the prairie sod as a reserved room in the King George Hotel.

That fall, 1911, Norman again rode horseback outside with Bill Belfry as companion, this time by way of Edson, where Norman left his horse, took the railroad to Edmonton and Lacombe. Here he loaded ten registered Shorthorn heifers and one bull, shipping them by railroad to Edson. There was a ferry at the Athabasca by this time, but other streams including the Smoky had to be swam.

Norman drove in his purebred herd of Shorthorn cattle, with the assistance of a purebred Collie dog from the Pat Burns kennels of Calgary. Norman purchased a .22 rifle in Edson to kill partridge for his dog, and bought a slab of bacon for himself. The collie refused to eat wild fowl, and as he was one busy dog herding cattle day and night, he began to lose weight. It turned out master ate partridge, Collie ate bacon. On the farm, if wild fowl bones turned up on Collie's plate, he carefully sorted them out, dug a hole and buried them.

Nina Talbot's load of freight in the winter of 1913 consisted of a big load of six-point barb wire, no more riding the prairie looking for stock. After the railroad came to Grande Prairie, the Talbots took their young herd bulls out to an Edmonton bull show and sale. They did real well financially at these sales. The Talbots were in the purebred cattle business until they sold their farm at Dimsdale in 1929. The cattle from that auction sale were readily purchased by local cattle men.

The Talbots hauled in their last load of freight over the Edson Trail in March, 1915. They had made noon day camp in the bottom of the Athabasca River. Breakneck Hill was ahead. They had made it up two steep pitches, Norman driving a team on a flat rack loaded with machinery and a year's supply of provisions. Nina was coming behind with a three-year-old registered Clydesdale stallion pulling the running gears of a cutter, a flat rack loaded with 700 pounds of flour, a registered yearling shorthorn bull following. The bull calf walked up hill, rode down. From the upper reaches of Breakneck could be heard a commotion. Norman shouted, "There comes Hootinhollerin and his mules," and pulled into the side of the road saying, "Pull in behind me as close as you can, and grasp the calf's halter shank." Down the steep incline came the mules on the run, the driver perched up on a load of hay. The mules made a bee line for Norman's team. Their neck yokes clashed and they stopped, otherwise one of Norman's horses would have been thrust through with a sleigh tongue. Norman had to flail those stubborn mules over their long ears to back them up and out onto the trail. Two frustrated teamsters stood out on the trail, listening to Hootinhollerin echoing on down the canyon. Dusk found them at the top of Breakneck where they camped for a restless night, for the timber wolves were howling in the hills.

The first Christmas day was spent at home with all the Christmas goodies that was possible to put together, including homemade candy. The second Christmas all the family went to Harry Clifford's in the Flying Shot district. The Cliffords had a store there. Rev. and Mrs. Forbes lived in Clifford's yard for some time before moving to their own place.

The first fair was held in a log shack on the east bank of Bear Creek, in September, 1910. There was a good showing of garden vegetables, canned wild fruits, canned meats, jams and jellies, dairy butter and homemade baking. The needle work display was very good.

Homesteaders came as far away as Spirit River to our fair. Sixty-nine successful fairs have followed that festive fair.

The first sports days were held on the north side of Lake Saskatoon on Mr. Wind's homestead. Sports were mostly foot races of all kinds, even had a minister's foot race with Rev. Forbes from the Presbyterian Church, the winner, the Methodist minister second. The race causing the most excitement was the oxen pulling a wagon, running in a straight-away line with the driver using whatever means he saw fit to get the most speed from his outfit. The Carrell Brothers from Beaverlodge were always the winners. Maybe it was the bell on the end of a rope used as an incentive first for one then for the other that won the race. The driver knelt on the floor of the wagon up front, perhaps to keep from falling out as the terrain wasn't exactly in track condition. The settlers had erected an outside dance floor - of rough lumber, with the natives supplying the music. Whites and natives danced together with the exception being the whites only lasted two days, while the natives carried on for a full week. If you were fortunate enough to own a milk cow, she came right along with you, to supply the milk for the children.

Frank and Anna took a young girl that had been stricken with polio and paralyzed into their home in January. They used the sister Kenny treatment of heat and massage on her. By the middle of May their patient was walking with the aid of a chair and went on to complete recovery.

Anna was a resourceful and determined woman, who many times saddled her horse "Bill" and rode for miles to administer medical aid to a sick homesteader and his family. On some occasions, she would set a fractured bone. She was also midwife for many mothers and babies, often taking them into her own home until able to look after themselves.

Richmond Hill was covered with low bush blueberries. Every summer the settler's wives would take turns providing transportation to the blueberry patch with a team of horses or oxen on lumber wagon and pick up as many ladies as possible for a berry picking party. Anna being the efficient one made everyone line up (all ten women) and pick in a line so the berries wouldn't be trampled. Just then Canon Smith drove up with cayuses and buckboard. Being an English gentleman, he proceeded to go down the line shaking hands with each one and enjoying a little visit. Canon had large feet and Nina can still recall the expression of dismay on Anna's face as she surveyed that path of blueberry juice.

Ralph Johnston developed a severe case of pleurisy in July 1911. Dr. Bradford was summoned from his South African scrip at Buffalo Lakes. Dr. Bradford drew a pint of liquid from Ralph's left lung. A year later it was evident the lung had collapsed, and Ralph must get to Edmonton to a lung specialist. Harry Adair was building three big river scows at Ed VanHorne's sawmill to transport oats down the Wapiti, Smoky and Peace Rivers to Peace River Crossing, to be transported by horses and wagons to McLennan where railroad construction was going on. Ralph started with them and finally reached Edmonton, and a specialist, by coach and steam boat. The specialist advised Ralph to go out to Portland, Oregon, to his uncle who was a specialist. Nine months later, Ralph returned to Spring Lake, and his neighbours cheered when they witnessed him making a home run in a ball game.

Frank Johnston was driving home from his 1912 harvest field with his four up and binder when one bronc kicked over the binder tongue, resulting in a runaway. Frank was thrown to the ground. His sons, Ray and Ralph, witnessed the runaway. They carried their father into his house and put him to bed and Ralph rode 13 miles for Dr. Anna Higbee. On examination of the ankle, Dr. Higbee said, "the bone has been shattered. All you can do is to keep the swelling down and as soon as you can, get your father out to Edmonton to a bone specialist."

As soon as the river froze up Ray and Ralph took their father and mother and eight year old brother, George, and a neighbor girl that wished to see a throat specialist, out to Edson by horse drawn caboose, where they could go on to Edmonton by train. At the Royal Alex Hospital, Dr. Allen advised Anna Johnston, it would be better to amputate the injured ankle above the break. Anna would not hear of the amputation. Anna and son, George, returned to Spring Lake by Edson, before the rivers broke up, and when Frank returned home in June, he was walking.

After the seeding, Spring Lake settlers gathered along the Wapiti River for a picnic, driving team and wagon to the top of the hill. Securely tying the team to a convenient tree, they slid down a hog's back that entered a hazel nut thicket, and a willow thicket (wondering if a black bear or a bull moose might be lurking there). The willow thicket opened out on to a pleasing beach, where Spring Creek entered the Wapiti River. It was an ideal camping ground. The settlers could indulge in wading, swimming, fishing and enjoy campfire coffee and a hearty lunch.

On May 24, a group of settlers were celebrating Queen Victoria day. After lunch the men in the party went up the river to explore, and came back carrying a balm log



Grandma Johnston, Shirley and Doris (granddaughters).

canoe, which they launched. The Watson Brothers, Hunter and Stonewall, tried out the canoe to see if it was river worthy, then invited two ladies to go in for a canoe ride. Mrs. Hunter Watson and Pearl Dillon accepted the invitation. The men carefully placed them in the canoe, Hunter paddling at the head, Stoney at the rear. The rest of the party ran along the shore cheering and dancing. The Wapiti took a sharp bend, but the canoe didn't, turning turtle and dumping it's occupants into the river. They scrambled out unassisted, drenched to the skin. Non-canoeists shared dry clothing and hung the wet garb on the willow bushes to dry out for the homeward trip while the canoeists warmed around a roaring campfire. Hunter Watson, a stocky Irishman, was a strong swimmer. Stripping down to his shorts, he would plunge into the Wapiti, swim to the opposite shore, do an Indian dance in the sand, plunge back into the river and soon be standing with the rest of the party again.

Spring Lake, covering approximately 100 acres, afforded food and recreation for the people of the district. Ducks and geese nested there in great numbers. Paddle-propelled homemade boats were always in evidence, taking part in boat races. There were also tobagganing races, three people to a sled, a man on skates to pull them. A bonfire on shore, was the lighting system. A snack, up in Frank Johnston's big log house and singsong around Anna Johnston's piano, the first piano brought into the Peace, was the end to a perfect day. It wasn't what the early settler possessed, it was his ability to appreciate what he did possess.

On January 13, 1916, Nina and Norman's first born decided to make her appearance. It was bitterly cold, 53 degrees below. Norman hitched the team to the jumper. Nina and all the blankets were loaded and off to Frank and Anna Johnston's big log house, where many babies were born. Norman, then rushed to Grande Prairie and got Dr. Higbee and came back as fast as the frosty air would allow the horses to run. There wasn't the need of hurry, Pearl was reluctant to be born, only the expert help of Anna Johnston and Dr. Higbee saved mother and baby.

On September 1, 1917, the stork again visited Nina and Norman, this time at their shack, as the new house was not yet completed. It had been raining and Grey Nellie, a three year old mare was tied in the barn, in the process of being broke to drive single. Norman hitched her to the buggy and handed the lines to Frank Cousineau to go to town to get Dr. Higbee, while he went to get Anna Johnston and Mrs. Clifford. A spent Grey Nellie and Frank returned, but Dr. Higbee had been called out on an earlier case. Norman and Ray Johnston decided to get Dillon's fast driving team and Dr. McDonald at Lake Saskatoon. The team was in the pasture and gave the men a merry chase before they were caught. Ray then drove as fast as he could to get the doctor. Mr. McDonald had just come home and gone to bed, but hurridly arose and cranked up his old car. The mud holes slowed him down. Ray kept catching up to him with the driving team. When they arrived at Talbot's at 8:00 in the morning, the stork had come and gone, and Oliver was one and a half hours old. Dr. McDonald had breakfast and went home.

In 1918, after a bad winter of the flu, Eileen was born, March 13. A tired Dr. O'Brien was in attendance, also Anna Johnston. Eileen was wrapped in a blanket and put in a big chair. Dr. O'Brien came out of the bedroom after attending to Nina and with a sigh sat down in the big chair, right on the baby. Anna yelled. Dr. O'Brien got up and said, "Oh, she'll be alright, I've sat on lots of them." He was right.

In 1919, a new two-story log house was built by the Talbots and a large barn with loft and hay slings. A hand-dug, 52-foot well was dug to provide water. Mixed farming was always the aim of the farm, with purebred shorthorn cattle, pigs, grain and hay farming. The driving team and democrat were means of transportation for many years.

November 5, 1926, Norma was born in the luxury of the old log hospital in Grande Prairie, Dr. O'Brien officiating. Transportation coming and going, team and cutter.

Donald was born after Nina and Norman moved to Kleskun Lake at Johanna Haakstad's Maternity Home in Sexsmith, March 4, 1930. The 18 mile trip made by team and sleigh, roads were impossible for the new Model T.

In 1927, Nina and Norman bought a quarter of land from Frank Cousineau completing their full section. Norman continued farming with the horses he took so much pride in, after other turned to tractor farming.

Four of the five Talbot children attended Wapiti School. Walking to school was the mode of the day, except in winter months, when skiing was fun, besides being a quick way to school. Pearl started in 1922, Oliver in 1923, and Eileen, in 1925. Norma was only three when the family left, so had not yet started.

Norman and Nina sold their farm in 1928 to Mr. and Mrs. Crane-Williams. Their intention was to go back to Lacombe and buy land. They left with that intention in mind, but he old district wasn't as they remembered and land prices were very high. After coming back and looking the area over, they decided Kleskun Lake was the place for them. Norman passed away in 1952, but Nina still lives there. As of this writing, (1979) she is 88 years old and keen in mind and memory.

Stanley Kasprow

written by Kasprow Family

Stanley and Sophia Kasprow arrived in Canada from Poland with their one year old daughter, Mary, in 1929. They spent days crossing the Atlantic, arriving in Canada in May, 1929. They travelled by train across Canada until they reached Wembley, where they were met by Stanley's brother Mike, who had settled earlier. Their destination was Saskatoon Mountain, about ten miles from Wembley. They homesteaded in the area for approximately 14 years.

They built their first log home, cleared land, raised their own vegetables and meat from the animals they raised. During the years spent there, six more children were added to the family, all having been born at home and delivered with the help of their father. Occasionally, a trip would be made to Wembley or Beaverlodge, an all day trip by horses and wagon to stock up on staples such as flour and sugar.

The children attended Mountain Side school, four miles from home. At times the trip was impossible, due to cold or wet conditions through the woods. An event Sophie remembers well was a forest fire while Stanley was away for several weeks working. The fire was so close to the house, she bundled the children and moved out into the nearby creek. At that point the wind shifted direction, thus saving the house.

Despite all the hard times, there was always plenty to eat. Many happy reunions spent with families and



Stanley and Sophie Kasprow 1945.

friends. In 1942 the family moved to Richmond Hill where they rented half a section. Stanley did some carpenter work at the airport besides farming. The children attended Percy school.

When the farm was sold a year later, they moved to Dimsdale and Wembley area where they purchased a farm from Sam Pickles. The children attended the Wapiti school and later Grande Prairie High School. The family farmed there from 1943 to 1960, when Stanley passed away suddenly after a brief illness, at the age of 57. Henry, the youngest, farmed for several years, while mother moved to Grande Prairie, where she still resides. The farm was sold.

The children have settled in different parts of the country: Mary Bliss at Bancroft, Ontario, with four children; Jean Miller at Prince George, B.C., with two children; Stella Bradshaw at Edmonton, Alberta, with two children; Bruce Kasprow at Toronto, Ontario, with two children; Jessie Balaski at Prince George, B.C., with two children; Henry Kasprow at Prince George, B.C., with two children. One son, Edward passed away at age 1.

Duncan Kennedy

Duncan Kennedy originally came from Ontario of Scottish ancestry. His brother, Pete, came west and settled in the Vermillion area around 1906. Duncan came to Grouard, Alberta in 1908. Grouard was the nearest post office and land office for this area at that time.

Some of the veterans of the South African War had filed on land that they wanted, but later changed their minds and sold their land to others. In January 1912, Duncan filed on quarter section NW 30-71-7-W6 which was given up by Fred Appleton who found it too far from his South African Scrip. Duncan homesteaded on this land though he had previously bought half section N½ 19-71-7-W6 from George Bennett in 1911.

Duncan's brother Laughlin (known as Donald) came to this area in 1917. He lived and farmed on the SE¼ 31-70-7-W6.

In 1916, Johan McLeod from Prestonpans, Scotland, became the wife of Duncan Kennedy. Johan's cousin Bob McKenzie (later postmaster at Kilkairn, B.C.) had introduced them via the mail. After many letters, Duncan proposed and sent money for Johan to buy her own engagement ring. In May, 1916, Johan travelled across the Atlantic, braving the German U-boats. She finally arrived in Edmonton by train and enquired about the train to Grande Prairie. She was horrified to be told that to get to Grande Prairie would mean an eight day trip by boat. Some people did travel part of the way on the rivers. This was mostly for people who had a lot of "stuff" to



Miss Johan McLeod, before her marriage to Duncan Kennedy, 1915.

transport and only in the summer months. The E.D. and B.C. Railway (Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia) had reached Grande Prairie by March 1916, but until May, was mostly work trains. It was known by some who had ridden it as the Extremely Dangerous and Badly Constructed Railway.

Johan was able to travel on one of the first E.D. and B.C. Railway passenger trains. The train travelled very slowly and for part of the time Johan walked beside it and picked wild flowers. Unfortunately, she lost her engagement ring and was never able to find it.

Duncan was waiting at the station to catch his first ever glimpse of his bride-to-be. They were married that day in Grande Prairie by a Justice of the Peace and travelled by wagon to the log shack on Duncan's homestead near Lake Saskatoon. This had been a one room shack for the bachelor Duncan, but in honor of his bride, he had built on another room for the bedroom. He planned to make the window into a door, but never got around to it, so Johan had to climb through the window to get to the bedroom.

Duncan had the nickname of Mule, because at one time he had a mule and three horses hitched to his plough. People found this different and amusing - hence the name.

Duncan's closest friend and neighbor was Leo Ferguson. They had arrived in the area about the same time. It was Mrs. Ferguson who taught Johan how to cook the pork that was kept in salt brine in a barrel in a corner of the room. She also learned to make bread, which came in good stead in later years when she had to feed many hired men and threshing crews. It was also necessary to strain the rabbit pellets from the snow and bugs from the slough water, as there was no well on this land.

Their first child, Isobel, was born here, then when she was about six months old they moved to Duncan's half section N½ 19-71-7-W6 just south of the highway. Duncan built a frame house which still stands today.

There were three children, Isobel (Mrs. Alfred Bayer) of Edmonton, John (Jack) of the Wembley district and Robert of Grande Prairie.

All the children were born at home - Dr. O'Brien from Grande Prairie and also Dr. Carlisle from Lake Saskatoon coming out to the farm by horse and buggy. Mrs. Newton, a midwife, travelled around with the doctor and she also helped in the house.

Isobel was baptized at the Spring Creek Church (Dimsdale) in 1918 by Rev. Forbes. Jack and Rob were never "done" though it had been arranged. The minister came out to the farm, was given a meal and while they were visiting, the boys, who were around four and two years old, fell asleep. Duncan then refused to allow them to be awakened as he thought they would probably be grouchy and "swear" at the minister.

Jud Owens owed Duncan some money for oats, but had difficulty finding the cash, so he made the payment with a piano, which is still in family use.

Some of their closest neighbors were the Leland Lucy family to the south, the George Jebbs and the Leo Fergusons. On the west side were Bill and Alex Craig and the George Stolls, while to the east lived the Percy Clubines and the Nels Andersons.

In 1925, the Kennedys bought a house in Wembley and Duncan worked in the Alberta Pacific Elevator for Mike Maloney. Shortly after, Duncan died and the family moved back to the farm and, with the help of her brother-in-law Don Kennedy (who farmed a quarter section about three miles south), carried on until 1927.



Isobel and Jack Kennedy.



Duncan Kennedy and son Rob.

In June 1927, Johan married a neighbor, Alex Craig, and he moved into her home. Alex farmed her land as well as his own.

Don Kennedy never married. He died in 1941 from pneumonia. He had always been frail, since having one lung removed as a child of four. Both Don and Duncan Kennedy are buried at Lake Saskatoon cemetery.

Konevecki Family

Walter and Angela Konevecki were both born in southern Poland in 1902. Although they grew up in neighboring properties, Angela joked that Walter never paid any attention to her until after he had been absent three years serving in the Polish Army. Upon his return home, Walter took a sudden interest in the girl next door. They married in 1928 and came to Canada in 1929 to seek their fortune and also because of some opposition to the marriage on the part of both of their families.

Their destination in Canada was a tiny pinprick on the map, north of Sexsmith, a place called Webster, where Angela had a second cousin. Funds ran low while they were journeying by train. They interrupted their journey for several weeks at Mundare, Alberta. Walter worked for a farmer, helping with spring seeding. A daughter, Emila, was born in the Lamont Hospital on June 1st.

With slightly improved funds and the new arrival, they continued their journey, arriving in Sexsmith, Alberta with $15 cash left over. Walter secured another farm job working for Joe Tomshak. He filed on a homestead in Webster which was then a Polish immigrant settlement. Joe was born in 1931. The homestead land proved to be poor, so a move was made to the Clairmont district onto rental land in 1932. In 1937, another move was made to the East Kleskun district where Elizabeth was born in 1937. In 1938, Walter purchased his first land, a quarter section from the Soldier Settlement Board in Dimsdale. The Konevecki's were home and land owners again. In the Polish language, the "cki" or "ski" suffix denotes that the family is or was at some point a land owner. Walter loaded up all his possessions onto a hay rack (the wide floor area enabled one to pack more articles onto the load), put his family on top of the load and began his last farm move. The load was pulled by two horses, with the other farm horses tied onto the back of the hay rack. The family dog trotted along behind. The children hung onto their pet cat for dear life. Brother-in-law John Latos herded the cattle behind the entourage.



Mr. and Mrs. Konevecki.

Upon arrival, about Easter time, Emila and Joe resumed their schooling at Wapiti School, a distance of three and a half miles. Emila was in grade two and Joe in grade one. Joe's memories of the walk the first day of school, was a stop at the Dimsdale Store where Mrs. Leslie treated him and Emila to a chocolate bar, a move sure to win friendship. Arrival at school meant an introduction to the local farm children. Memories of that first day are still clear and vivid.

In addition to farming his home quarter, Walter rented a quarter to the east from a Mr. Porteous, and subsequently bought it a year or two later. In the early years, other land was rented. The family ran a mixed farm, growing cereal crops, raising cattle, hogs and poultry. Walter farmed with horses until 1943, when the first tractor was purchased. The horses were sold to a mink rancher. A new barn was built in 1941. A new house and the first family car were added in 1943. In 1943, the last family addition, a daughter, Dorothy, was born on Valentine's day. The depression years had gone although the family had not been conscious of being poor. Economically the family was prospering; in outlook and reality, they had always been rich.

In the winters, community life took over. Angela had been shy during the first few years among the English speaking people. As she learned the language and was able to communicate, it became evident that she had a deep love for people, she loved company, she loved to talk, and to play cards until late at night, and especially she loved cooking for and entertaining people. She always raised a large garden. Summer visitors from town always left with a bix box full of vegetables and a frozen chicken or two from the deep freeze. She always shared what she had.

Walter shared Angela's love for people and was always gregarious and loquacious by nature. He never forgot anyone he met, never forgot a name and usually went quite deeply into a person's history when he met a stranger. Over the years he built up quite a knowledge of the people of the Peace Country, and upon meeting a



Walter holding Dorothy, and Joe.

stranger could usually say he knew the person's father, uncle, second cousin or something about the person.

The four Konevecki children took their elementary grades in Dimsdale and went on to St. Joseph's Catholic High School in Grande Prairie. Emila took a stenography course and worked for a law firm before marrying Oscar Blais. She and her husband live in Grande Prairie and have three children, Ron, Carol, and Mark. Joe became a Chartered Accountant and lives in Peace River. He married Mary Hrabinski, and the family consists of five chidren; Tommy, Terry, Shelley, Michael and Cathy. After High School graduation, Elizabeth worked as an accountant for several General Motors Dealers. She is married to Les Jackson and lives in North Vancouver, B.C. Dorothy trained as a Medical Technologist and presently heads the Laboratory Department in the hospital in Grande Prairie. She married Terry Tissington and they have one daughter, Kristi.

With the children gone, Walter and Angela moved to Grande Prairie, in the fall of 1966. Angela died suddenly in the spring of 1967. The joys of retirement were not for her. Walter still lives in Grande Prairie. He sold the farm in 1968. He works part-time for the Grande Prairie museum during the summer. He loves to travel, having gone back for visits to Poland in 1968 and 1973, sadly without Angela. He has travelled quite extensively with the Grande Prairie Old Timers, walks down to the Co-op every morning for coffee and a long chat with old timers. He won't miss his bowling game for anything and also loves to curl and lawn bowl. He still knows and loves half the people in Alberta and is working on the other half.

John Lake

I left Devon, England in April 1909, for Canada and landed at Halifax. I was 17 years old and proceeded to Montreal and on to Toronto, Ontario. I worked on farms for five months then left on a harvest - excursion to the West. When harvest was over, I went to Edmonton, stayed there until spring of 1910, and worked on the Grand Trunk Railroad until the fall of that year.

Back in Edmonton, I met Bill and Arthur Stone of Beaverlodge. They were going to Grande Prairie with five teams and asked me to drive for them. Our route took us down the Athabasca River (frozen) to Athabasca Lake, then across Slave Lake to High Prairie, then to Simonette River, to Smoky River and Bezanson Stopping Place. Next morning we doubled up teams to go up the steep hill from Smoky River and on to Grande Prairie city.

I had been hearing about this city all the way up, and what a surprise! The post office, general store and stopping place was all. When I asked where the city was, they said "Oh, it will be some day" but it was some years away. Well, now it has happened.

Lake Saskatoon was the main centre at that time and there I filed for my homestead at Spring Lake.

I remember having a terrible toothache, and was going to see about it, when I met the dentist, Dr. Sproule on the trail and he sat me on a rock and pulled my tooth sans freezing. OWWW."

There were deer, bears and foxes in this area then. My nearest neighbours were Jack McIntosh, Graff McLeven and the Cuthbertsons.

There was a terrible flu epedemic, people dying and no doctor available. I was taken down with it and was looked after by neighbours who were Christian Scientists, and survived.

When the banks came in they pushed the homesteaders to go into debt for machinery and tractors, and when the crash came and wheat was 40¢ a bushel and oats 15¢, many went bankrupt so the banks moved in and cleaned up. I myself lost everything.

During the winter I worked for Bob Tilt, who had a cafe at Lake Saskatoon. Cutting ice with a saw. One time, I left the lake to go somewhere and Bob couldn't see me and he thought I had fallen under the ice and he was upset until he saw me coming back. Some winters I cut cord wood for the Flour Mill.

I remember an event that happened in 1911 while travelling on the trail with a friend. We came to a trappers cabin. He was cooking lunch and invited us to share it. After, he asked us how we liked it. We said "fine". He asked us if we knew what it was, and we said "no". He said it was muskrat legs. If I had known, I would have had second thoughts about it.

Travelling was much easier after the Edson trail was finished. I came down it from Grande Prairie one winter to work in a tie camp, cutting ties for the railway. One journey I won't forget. I was carrying my blankets, as we all did then, walking the railroad and came to a trestle that had few ties and those far apart, and it was miles down below. It was unfinished, only for trains, and I hoped none would come along as I could not get off. It was at least a mile long and I was very glad to get off.

Paul Larson

Paul Larson came from Hornindal, Nordfjord, Norway in 1888 to the state of Minnesota, USA. He was 18 years of age at the time and found work on farms doing a variety of things and also worked in the lumber camps. Marie Johnson, his future wife also came over from Norway and arrived in Minnesota in 1890. She found employment in a household, where there were several young children and the mother was not well. Paul and Marie were married in March, 1902 and set up their own farmstead where three of their four children were born, Jennie, Pearl and Fred.

Paul, like so many others, was to hear of the great country, Canada, and particularly the Peace River Country. So, on April 1st, 1913, the family arrived in Edson, Alberta where he got work for a time. Then, in February, 1914, he and two other fellows walked in over the Edson Trail. He filed on his quarter of land, SE 1-71-7-W6 and stayed to build a house and barn and to clear off about 10 acres of bush for breaking. Since his family had returned to the States during this time, he left to join them there in the fall of 1914, arriving back in Minnesota the end of August, just in time to help with the harvesting, which was just getting underway.

In December, 1914, the whole family once again returned to Edson, Alberta. At this time serious preparations were made to come to Grande Prairie and the new homestead. They and another family, the Sundals, who had been neighbors of the Larsons in Minnesota, left Edson by team and sleigh to travel up to Grande Prairie over the "Trail". It took them nine days and many stops before arriving here on February 1, 1915.

The children did not start school until spring, as the school was closed during the winter months in those days. They went to the Wapiti School, which was several miles from where they lived.

Another daughter was born in September, 1917 at Mrs. Benson's nursing home, with Dr. Higby in attendance at

the birth, which was to take the life of Mrs. Marie Larson.

Paul Larson stayed on the farm and continued to farm and raise his three children. Baby Elsie went to live with the Benson's, in the home where she had been born. The Benson's moved to Brandon, Manitoba in 1926 and Elsie moved with them.

Paul Larson always had cattle and horses and continued to farm. Pearl and Fred went to Flying Shot School, when it was built in 1919 (or 20) as it was much closer. Jennie was needed at home to help her father take care of the family.



Paul Larson and son Fred going for a drive in 1921.



Four generations: Paul Larson with his daughter Jennie McQuitty, granddaughter Marian Steinke and great-granddaughter Sandra Steinke.

Then in 1922 tragedy struck the family once again, when their farm home was destroyed by fire. Jennie and Pearl were working in Grande Prairie by this time, so had quite a few of the family possessions there, including some furniture and dishes, as well as some of their mother's heirlooms.

Jennie married Hiram McQuitty of Sexsmith, and lived in Sexsmith for a number of years before moving to the farm in 1931. They were to live on the farm until 1961, when they retired to Grande Prairie. They have five children, Marion (Harold) Steinke of Sexsmith-east, Dorothy (Danny) Arac of Grande Prairie, Stan (Shirley) McQuitty of Ft. McMurray, Shirley (Danny) Shannon of Sexsmith, Jeanette (Jim) Fletcher of Grande Prairie.

Pearl moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1924 and then to Brandon, Manitoba where she married William Finley of that city. They moved back to Winnipeg in 1928, where they were to live the rest of their lives. Pearl passed away in 1973 and Bill still lives there in a nursing home.

Fred spent a number of years on the farm with his father and married Edith Barley. They continued to farm and they had one daughter, Jean (Mrs. Victor Ridden) of Edmonton. Then he moved to High Prairie, where he did carpenter work for many years. He remarried and had two sons, Keith (Inez) Larson of Edmonton, and LaVerne Larson of Edmonton.

Elsie (or Lela Benson, as she was named by her new family) became Mrs. Tom Brown and lived on a farm out of Dauphine, Manitoba until recently, when she and her husband retired and moved into Dauphine. They have two children, Lance (Diane) Brown of Winnipeg and Kathy Brown of Winnipeg, who is still in University.

Paul Larson sold his land in about 1945 to Frank Gibney and moved to High Prairie to live for a few years. Then he came to Sexsmith to live with his daughter Jennie in 1947 and remained there until the time of his death in April, 1955 at the age of 85 years.

At that time, he had 10 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Gladys and Norman Leslie

by Gladys Leslie

On September 30, 1930, we moved from Glen Leslie to Dimsdale, to manage the store and post office for Mr. Kenneth Morrison. We first lived in the elevator house, still to be seen in the hamlet. We moved from there when the dwelling and warehouse attached to the store were completed by Mr. William Pratt, who had taken over the store from Kenneth Morrison.

Shortly after our arrival in Dimsdale, our daughter, Jean, and son Keith, developed whooping cough - a great initiation to our new life.

At that time there were only two other dwellings on the town site, one belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Ramsfield and daughter, Margaret, and the other to Mrs. Rose VanSickle and her family consisting of Ralph,



Left to right: Norman, Gladys, Jean and Keith.

Edith, Grace, Maurice and Allan. There were three elevators, Northern, Alberta Wheat Pool, and United Grain Growers. The hall, a former blacksmith shop, had been renovated and was in use when we moved there. There was also a small building on the corner of the land owned by Mr. Frank Johnston, in which his wife used to teach Sunday School. Many good dances were held in the hall and numerous variety programs.

When we first moved there, church services were held in the Spring Creek United Church with Rev. Simond from Wembley the officiating clergyman. Other ministers who followed him were, Rev. Carr and Rev. Huston, Rev. Arthur Boorman, Rev. Newman Truax, Rev. Roy Chubb, Milton Swarren and Mr. Kranendonk, lay ministers. Some of the services in later years were held in the Dimsdale Hall. After Mr. and Mrs. Housworth started the Grace Children's home, a community Sunday School was established and is still active today.

Norman worked in the store until 1935, when he went to Beaverlodge to take over the Massey Harris agency. I continued to look after the store and post office and for several years had the various elevator agents boarding at our home. At the time when the Alberta Wheat Pool elevator was struck by lightning and later rebuilt, I cooked for the building crew with the help of Freda and Nell Lewis. Other ladies who helped me out during those years were: Thelma Storey, Marjorie Fretenburg, Florice Cooley and Hilda Card.

Norman remained in Beaverlodge for one year and then came back to Dimsdale as Pool elevator agent. In 1942, he enlisted in the Veterans' Guard and served with them until 1946 at which time he returned to his work as an elevator agent.

We continued to live in Dimsdale even after Norman joined the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires. I operated the post office until it was closed in 1966. The store had been closed for a couple of years prior to that - a victim of the ease of travel to the larger shopping areas.

We moved to Grande Prairie in 1968, where Norman continued to work as a Commissionaire. He passed away in May, 1972 in his eighty-third year.

Our happiest times in Grande Prairie were, when former neighbors dropped in to visit and to have a cup of tea or coffee with us. These informal coffee visits had been a very warm and vital part of our life in Dimsdale during the many years that we lived there. As anyone who has operated a country store and post office can tell you, it is the friendly visits with the customers that made it all worth while.



Left to right: Keith, Gladys, Norman, Mrs. Thomas Leslie and Bruce.



Elwood, Sharon, Arlene and Laurel Rooney.

Our daughter, Jean, following graduation from high school, attended McTavish Business College in Edmonton. She worked for Weber Brothers Agencies for a few months before returning home to help me with the store and post office while Norman was in the Veterans' Guard. In 1946, she started to work for Horne and Pitfield Limited in Grande Prairie. In 1947, she and Elwood Rooney were married. Elwood was an elevator agent for United Grain Growers in Dimsdale from 1946 to 1955, when the family moved to Clairmont. They remained there until 1975, when they moved to Grande Prairie. They had three daughters and a son. Sharon, now Mrs. Ron Bishop of Edmonton, is a nurse at the Royal Alexandra hospital. Arlene is a Radiological Technician and is also employed at the Royal Alexandra hospital. Laurel, now Mrs. Doug Reynolds of Grande Prairie, is a nurse at the Grande Prairie hospital. Garnet has worked with Alberta Government Telephones since he completed his course in telecommunication at NAIT, in 1976. He was recently transferred to Grande Prairie.

Elwood passed away suddenly in December, 1976 following an accident in which he was hit by a car while walking to work. Jean continues to live in Grande Prairie and is employed by the Grande Prairie hospital.

Our son Keith, attended school at Wapiti School, Millarston School and in Grande Prairie. He worked with MacDonald's Consolidated and the Singer Sewing Machine Company, before enlisting with RCASC and serving in Korea. In October, 1948 he married Joyce

Cleve, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. George Cleve of the Scenic Heights district. At present Keith is part owner and general manager of the Heidelberg Inn, Lethbridge. Joyce has her own accounting business. They have three children, Terry, their son, is married to Debbie Fecho and both have just completed their teacher training. Valerie, their daughter, is married to Dale Snodgrass, a teacher at Stettler. Murray, their youngest son, is at home.

Ted & Ellen (Nell) Lewis

J.E. Lewis (Ted) was born in England, one of a family of 13, (seven boys and six girls). He met and married Ellen Cooke and they came to Canada in 1912, with a daughter, Freda. Their stopping place was Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where he did stone and brick work.

They built a brick store in Saskatoon in 1912 which is still standing. Army and Navy have it now. T. Eatons had it before.

Ted then took up a homestead at Pinkham, Saskatchewan, where a son, Joe, was born and a daughter, Ellen. They later moved to Marengo where another daughter, Irene, was born. There they were either dried out or blown out on the bald prairie.

In 1927, hearing of the Peace River Country, he came up and rented a farm at Dimsdale from Mr. Dixon, which at that time had a log house on it. The Peace River Country looked so beautiful after the prairie. He rented several different places, one being the Norman Talbot farm, which Mr. Crane-Williams, coming from England, had bought, and which is now the Grace Children's home.

In 1930, he built a fireplace at the old golf course club on Richmond Hill.

Joe, Nellie and Irene went to the Wapiti school. Nellie and Irene went through for teachers, taking their grade 10 and 11 at Lake Saskatoon and grade 12 in Grande Prairie (normal in Edmonton). They taught several schools around including Wapiti, which Nellie taught in 1938.

Joe married Emily Stephenson, farmed awhile, then moved to Clairmont to run an elevator.

Freda met and married Edgar Jebb.

In 1943, Ted Lewis sold out and moved to Vancouver, where he worked at his trade, brick and stone chimneys and fire places.



Ted and Ellen Lewis, Bill and Rene Elliott, taken July 9, 1949.

Nellie and Irene also moved to Vancouver, where Irene met and married W. Elliott and Nellie married Don Poulter. They still live at the coast.

Ted and Ellen Lewis have both passed away now.

Linden Family - Mr. and Mrs. G.A. and William, Jean and Carl

by Tony (G.A.) Linden

At the age of 13, I left my home in Jenner, Alberta to work as a hired hand on various jobs across the Prairie. I remember one job, stack threshing, brought me a total pay of two dollars for two weeks work. By the age of 20, I had worked at nearly every job possible. This is when I decided to come to Dimsdale and start farming. Here I bought a half section of school land (NW 11-71-7-W6). A very well liked neighbor, Wes Stephen, bought the other half section. Our son, Carl, now owns this land. Ralph Johnston, our other close neighbor, lived across the creek from our quarter.



Tony, William, Jean, and Mrs. Linden.

Things were quite different when I just started. For the first year here I live in a granary. My equipment consisted of a 16'' plow, drill, harrows and a team of four horses.

In 1934, I married Frances Ellen Card, daughter of William Card. My wife's father and youngest brother were both buried in the Spring Creek Cemetery. Both were later moved to the Grande Prairie Cemetery, though. The land for the Spring Creek Cemetery, 10 acres, was donated by a bachelor, Fred Bowman. Doc Forbes was the founder of the church. Frank Johnston built the pews and the pulpit that were used.

Frances and I spent our first years living in a 10 x 12' shack, to which I later added two additions. In this time, our three children were born, first our son William in August, 1935, our daughter, Jean, in June 1937 and our son Carl, in September, 1945.

Now having the three children, we decided it was time to build a new home. So, in 1951, I started working on it in my spare time. By the spring of 1952, we were able to move in. Frances and I still live in this home.

William and Jean attended the Wapiti School here for nine years. They went to Grande Prairie for the high school years. Carl attended the Wapiti School for only five years, before going to Grande Prairie to finish. He

attended the Harry Balfour School and then went to the High School.

My son, William, started farming with me in 1955. That summer he married Edna Stevenson of Debolt. They lived with us for one year before building a small home of their own in our yard.

In 1965, William bought the old Dillon homestead, (NE 4-71-7-W6) where he and Edna have built their present home. They have one daughter, Sheryle, who is married to Allan Benson, and they live in Grande Prairie. They have one child, a son, Troy William.

Our daughter Jean, married in 1956, to Robert Stevenson, and moved to Debolt, Alberta. She is still living there. They have three children, Dale, of Grande Prairie, Janice of Grande Prairie and Brenda still living at home. Janice is married to Edwin Widdifield and they have one son, Michael William.

Carl started farming in 1968. He and William are still farming together. Carl married one year later to Maureen Ockert, of Grande Prairie. Maureen taught at the Swanavon School in Grande Prairie for nine years. They live on the old Wes Stephen quarter (SE 11-71-7-W6). They have recently built a new home on this land. They have one daughter Erin Anne, who was born March of 1978.

At the age of 66, I decided to retire. Frances and I still live on the farm, and enjoy watching the progress that has come about for our sons since we first started farming.

The Daniel Macauley Family

by Irene Crerar—(daughter)

Daniel and Margaret Macauley came to the Dimsdale district in 1926 from Grande Prairie where they had lived a short while after coming from Ireland, where they were married. Previously Dad had lived in British Columbia. There he owned a ranch and lived with his first wife, who died suddenly.

They bought the Rasmussen farm about two miles south of the Wapiti School. They farmed there until Dad died in 1950. Then Alfred and Mother farmed until 1957, when the farm was sold to Vernon Hawkes.

Margaret, the oldest daughter, married Eric Engual of Edmonton and they have two girls.

Sylvia married a farmer from Wetaskiwin, Art Peterson, and they had a boy and girl.



Left to right: standing, Myrtle holding Patsy, Sylvia, Margaret, Mrs. Macauley and Mr. Macauley.
Front: Irene, Alfred, Angela, and Ernie.



Left to right: Larry, Phillip, Irene, Herb and Linda Crerar.



The Ernie Macauley family.
Back: Barbra, Donna, David, Kathy.
Front: Erna, Pop, Kevin, Brenda, Mom, Karen.

Myrtle of Churchill, Manitoba, married Hans Berg of South Wapiti and they have three boys.

Madeliene, of Pouce Coupe, married Adrian Barber. They have four boys and two girls.

Angela lives in Edmonton and is married to Aurel LeBlanc and they have four children, and Angela also has four by a previous marriage.

Ernie lives in the Wembley district and is married to Edith Ericson. They have six girls and two boys.

Alfred lives in Grande Prairie and is single.

Mother died in the year of 1961.

I married Herb Crerar of Grande Prairie in 1948. Herb is the oldest son of Florence and Jim Crerar. We bought the Crerar family farm and farmed until 1978. Having sold the farm, we moved to the city of Grande Prairie in May of 1979. We have three children; Larry, Linda and Phillip. Larry married Rosemarie Hodges and they live in Grande Prairie. Linda lives in Edmonton and is married to Murray Elliott. Phillip is married to Maureen Rowney. At time of writing we have no grandchildren.

Angus MacLellan

It was on July 5, 1934 that I arrived in the hamlet of Dawson Creek, B.C. after a six day train trip from my home on beautiful Cape Breton Island. Before leaving home, Mother had me believing I was bound for the wild and woolly west. This indeed was my first impression of Dawson Creek as their annual stampede was in full swing. Not knowing of this big event or having heard of such, I naturally believed this to be the way of life.

The train fare at that time, excursion rates return, was in the seventy dollar bracket. The return portion of the ticket, as anticipated, was never used. This large sum of money at that time was provided by three older brothers. Plus my ticket, I was provided with a pair of $2.49 shoes, the only new attire to my name. I did not, however, come to a land completely unknown, as I had an Uncle in the Rolla district, who like many others came over the famous Edson Trail and homesteaded at Rolla, B.C.

The years from 1934 to 1941, were taken up with seasonal work with the United Grain Growers and farm work at Rolla along with truck driving. As an assistant elevator agent, I started at Pouce Coupe, a salary of $50 and slept in the office. Then to Dawson Creek at a salary of $55. I stayed in the Dawson Hotel, board and room for $30 per month. This I considered a great step up. Yes, a step up to the hotel third floor with the hired help which was greatly appreciated. Then assistant at Beaverlodge and on to Wembley with the late, well known, Wallace Edgar.

In 1941, I was placed in charge of my first elevator at Beaverlodge and in 1943 transferred to Dawson Creek. During my stay at Dawson Creek, I married Annis Rae of Bentley. We have four children, two boys and two girls. Another transfer in 1958 took us to Leduc, Alberta and in 1968 to the good Peace River Country and the lovely district of Dimsdale.

My years as operator of the UGG elevator at Dimsdale were not many in numbers but were memorable ones. However, my first introduction goes back 40 years in the form of a social party. At that time I was employed at the UGG in Grande Prairie and entertainment for the younger crowd was difficult to come by. A group of us decided to go to Dimsdale and with the aid of a hand cranked gramophone and a small keg of beer, we took over the Dimsdale hall, at that time, the converted blacksmith shop. If I remember correctly at that time the lights in the hall were not functioning, but being the month of June, we carried on with the light of the midnight sun.

Donald (Gordon) McIntosh

Gordon, second son of Jack and Mable McIntosh was born January 10, 1926, at Regina, Saskatchewan. In August of 1927, he accompanied his parents and brother Ken to the family farm at Dimsdale. There he was to remain for most of his life.

Gordon took his first nine years of school at the Wapiti school. Grade ten was taken at the Grande Prairie High School. That year the family had moved to Grande Prairie because father Jack was in the army and brother Ken was in the air force. The following spring, (1942) Gordon, Mother, brothers Dennis and Ed moved back to the farm and Gordon operated the farm for the remainder of the war years. After the return of Ken from overseas, Gordon returned to high school for one year, followed by one year at the Vermillion School of Agriculture.

Upon his return from Vermillion, Gordon and brother Ken formed a partnership and took over the farm. This lasted until 1964, when Gordon decided to be on his own. It was then he married Pat Ford and settled in the Millarston district. There they built a new home on the south-west corner of the school section. This had been part of the farm which he and Ken had operated. Twins Duncan and Doreen soon arrived, followed by twins Jason and Joyce.

Over the years Gordon was active in many fields. With his sense of humor and his singing ability, he was always the life of a party. For many years, he was catcher and captain of the Dimsdale softball team. He raised purebred Hereford cattle and served on the executive of the Peace River Hereford Club.

Being interested in his community, he was active in the Dimsdale Community Club and served his term as President and helped out whenever needed.

Gordon was stricken with cancer in 1968 and passed away in July, 1969 at the age of 43.

The J. Ken McIntosh Family

Son of J.L. (Jack) and Mabel McIntosh, I was born March 1, 1923, in Regina, Saskatchewan. My earliest recollection of the Peace River was in Regina, asking my father to tell me about "Peace River" again, and apparently for the umpteenth time, by his tone of exasperation. However of our travel by train to Grande Prairie, at the age of four, I have no memory whatever.

Our first home was a neat, rather cold, frame house on the north shore of Spring Lake, now known as Dimsdale Lake. Wild ducks by the thousands, settled in the lake and in the fields at harvest time and rabbits were a scourge during the winters. Of the hundreds of trees set out around our home, none escaped being mutilated by rabbits and most were killed outright. Memories are vivid of that pretty lake, although it held a nasty pest - the bloodsucker. Many winter crossings were made in a total whiteout, not always right on the trail and many times in the spring, horses had to jump up onto the ice and flounder off on the other side.

Wapiti school, the log building, was cold as the mischief. Lunches froze and felt boots or felt socks were the rule all day in mid-winter. Memories abound, but how about sharing just two. 1) Boys eating lunch in the warmth above the ceiling by climbing the cloakroom wall. 2) The J.O. Stewart boys, (there were eight in all) who loved to fight, if not some other family, then among themselves.

It was a great day when we moved to the new school, which was built by Bell contractors. As neighbors on Spring Lake, we had the Stephensons to the west, Bill Belfry a bit south of them and to the east, the Cousineau family and Graft McLevin, and, of course, the "Lacombe Johnstons" directly across the lake with Grandma

Johnston teaching Sunday School. Many a day was spent playing ball at Ralph Johnstons, partaking of their hospitality and companionship.

Well do I remember George Wisdom pulling brown icicles from his scraggly old beard, charge accounts, meeting the train being engulfed in clouds of steam, carrying the mail bags across to the store and post office, and farm and community organizations meeting in the store. At one time there was a second store in the hamlet, but it didn't last long.

"Miscellaneous memories" - Long days cutting burnt and black rails and hauling them home over built up roads with sleighs cutting off the road. A pole chained to the load and sticking over the high side with a man or boy perched there to prevent a tip over into four feet of snow. Similar expeditions hauling hay and straw and often having to reload more than once. Being taught to travel through the bush without making any noise - this under the direction of Joe Cousineau who had inherited such lore from native ancestors. Picking bushels of cranberries on Saskatoon Mountain and blueberries along the Wapiti. Of being caught in a terrific rain down on the flats at Cap McLean's with a two-ton truck, a load of berry pickers, a long rope and all the men pulling up front to get us back up the hill.

Trapping muskrats by the hundreds and in competition with twenty or so others; starting 12:01 midnight on the opening of the season. Spring Lake provided a bountiful supply of fur for many years and did much to keep a little cash flowing.

"Batching" in Grande Prairie when taking high schooling. First, in a small brown house where Windsor Motors later operated, and now where the new Bank of Nova Scotia is. Second, in the rambling old Spencer Block where the Macleods store was built. Batching partners were Jim Fletcher, Wilf Telfor and Dick Withers.

"Later history" - Following Air Force service with 8th Group Bomber Command stationed primarily in Yorkshire, England, farmland was leased from the Grande Prairie Golf Club and then raw crown land at Millarston was purchased under VLA sponsorship. This was the north half of the school section which had been held under grazing lease by Soren Fredricksen and then Seath Sutherland. Farming, ranching and feedlot operation occupied the next 30 years with a few excursions into various public service types of activity.

Among these were: charter member of the Dimsdale Recreational Society, member of Alberta Wheat Pool committees, actively with the South Bear Lake Mutual Telephone Company, (first family phone number was R103), Grande Prairie County Agricultural Society (Director and President for one term), Director Grande Prairie and District Co-operative Society, Secretary of District 1, FUA, Director following Uri Powell, Provincial executive member and vice president, Trustee of the Alberta Agricultural Research Trust, Board member of Governors of University of Alberta, Member of U of A Senate and member of the Alberta Public Revenue and Expenditure Committee. Later a term was put in as secretary to the South Peace Stock Growers.

In 1953, I married Marian Horton who grew up at Dunvegan on the north side of the Peace River. Three children, William (Bill), Darrell and Brenda were raised and now fending for themselves in Toronto, Calgary and Salmon Arm.

Our present home is Salmon Arm, B.C. on the Shuswap Lake and our occupations are Real Estate sales and Avon sales.

John Logan McIntosh

John (Jack to everyone) was born on the family farm at Whitewood, Saskatchewan on March 24, 1896. He was the second of four sons born to Dan and Margaret McIntosh. He took his schooling at Whitewood, and normal school training in Regina.

After teaching for a year and a half, he enlisted in the Canadian Army at Regina, to serve in World War I. He served overseas for three years with the 68th Battalion, attaining the rank of corporal. He saw front line duty with the infantry in France, taking part in the battles of Vimy, Somme and others. While serving in France he was burned by mustard gas. Following this, Jack was to spend many months in hospital at Edinburgh, Scotland and Kent, England.

Now medically unfit for further service, he was repatriated home in the spring of 1918. Following his return from the war, Jack enrolled at the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon. This only lasted six months when the desire to strike it rich in the Peace River country took over. In the spring of 1919, Jack and his friend, Reg Baird, set off to carve their future in the Peace River country.

Spring Lake near Dimsdale took Jack's eye, and he bought the SW 21-71-7W6. This had been the homestead of a man named Van Horne. This quarter was situated on the north side of Spring Lake.

Having acquired his land, Jack returned to the family farm at Whitewood, Saskatchewan. After helping with the harvest, he again returned to Dimsdale, this time accompanied by a young neighbour boy named Lewis Hawkes (later he would become his brother-in-law). This time he also brought a car load of settlers' effects, including four horses and two mules.

By December, they had erected a four room frame house overlooking Spring Lake. Jack once again returned to Saskatchewan and on January 1st, 1920, took as his bride, Mabel Florence Hawkes. The following day the newlyweds set out for their new home at Dimsdale, Alberta. They travelled on the CPR via Calgary to Edmonton, then on the E.D. and B.C. line to Grande Prairie.

Soon after arriving at their new home, Jack found himself teaching at the Wapiti school. This position lasted until spring when a permanent teacher arrived. That same year (1920), Jack was elected to the Wapiti School Board, and also became a member of the Spring Creek Church board.

Following the dry years of 1920 and 1921, Jack returned to the Saskatchewan area to teach school until better years returned. He rented the farm out and took a teaching position at Aurora School, three miles east of Regina. During the five and a half years spent here, sons Kenneth and Gordon were born.

In August of 1927, Jack returned to the farm at Dimsdale, bringing another car load of machinery and supplies. The family followed later, and they started farming again.

April of 1928 saw the arrival of son, Dennis, with Edmund following in February 1931. This completed the family of four boys.

Jack was once again elected to the Wapiti School board, and the Spring Creek United Church board, holding both positions for many years. Later when the Grande Prairie school divisions were formed, he was one of the original members.

In the late 1930's, Jack operated a coal mine on the Wapiti River. This was a strip mine, which meant all the earth and rock on top of the coal had to be removed first. The mine being on the south side of the river meant that any coal mined in the summer time had to be transported across the river by boat and from there, taken with horses to Grande Prairie.

With the outbreak of World War II, Jack again enlisted in the Army, in August of 1940 at Edmonton. After a one month training period at Currie Barracks, Calgary, he was posted to the newly established basic training centre at Grande Prairie, with the rank of Sergeant, later rising to Lieutenant. With the war slowing down in 1944, the centre at Grande Prairie was closed and Jack took his discharge.

When the boys took over the farm, after the war, Jack became active in the Legion, Alberta Farmers Union and maintained his interest in the Social Credit Party. At this same time he took a teaching position at Grovedale which continued until the end of 1956-57 school year.

Soon after this, Jack and Mabel retired to Grande Prairie. His main interest now was the Canadian Legion, where he spent many hours helping fellow members in distress. On May 10, 1972, both Jack and brother-in-law Lewis Hawkes passed away in the Grande Prairie Hospital.

At the time of this writing (January 1979), Mabel now aged 84 years, enjoys good health, keeps very active and lives at Heritage Lodge in Grande Prairie. She enjoys visiting with her three sons (Gordon having passed away in 1969), her sixteen grandchildren and one great grandchild.

The William A McLelland Story

William A. McLelland filed on the NW 6-71-7-W6 in 1913 and proved it up in the next few years, later selling to Don Noyes. Mr. McLelland was nominated to the school board of the Wapiti School on January 9, 1915, for a term of three years. At a meeting on December 27, 1919, Mr. McLelland's resignation from the school board was accepted, and his name does not appear in later pages.

Grafton Donald McLevin

Grafton Donald McLevin, "Graff" as he was called, came to the Peace River Country from Woodstock, Ontario in 1909.



Grafton McLevin in his retirement years.

Graff and his brother came over the Long Trail (a route which came by way of Athabasca Landing, Lesser Slave Lake and Grouard) with an ox team.

Finding land to his liking in Dimsdale, Graff returned two years later to file on SW 22-72-7-W6 as well as acquiring the east half of that section. It was on this land that he built a home and started farming. Graff always farmed with horses, preferring them to tractors. As he didn't have a well, he always hauled his water from a lake nearby.

In 1963, Graff sold his home-quarter to Ken Davies and moved to Grande Prairie.

Graff was a member of the Old Timers Association.

On January 3, 1979, at the age of 92, Grafton McLevin passed away at the Grande Prairie Auxiliary Hospital.

Allan F. McQuarrie

(Teacher at Wapiti #2802)

It was the winter of 1932-33. I had just finished a short spell as teacher at the Bonanza school (east of Pouce Coupe), but because of lack of funds, that school was closed at Christmas. I am not sure of the exact reason, but similarly the Wapiti School found itself without a teacher at Christmas, and I was asked if I would be interested. Although I had had only one and a half year's experience and was a little hesitant to go to a well established school, nevertheless, I accepted.

At that time it was a one-room school. The building was covered with galvanized iron panels over, I believe, a log base. The inside had also been refurbished some years before, so it was quite acceptable. There was an entrance porch as a partial storm shelter on the eastern end and I believe an inside anteroom or cloakroom. A large pot-bellied stove stood near the door with a galvanized iron shield surrounding it, the purpose of which was to provide a circulation of warm air throughout the room and in general, it worked quite well. Drinking water was delivered daily by the Stoll family in a five gallon milk can. I recall that I instituted the use of a syphon hose system to replace the previous procedure of merely dipping a cup into the can when a drink was desired.

Desks were placed in several rows (four or five) fastened on 1" x 4" strips so that they could be moved around. In those days the style of desk was a combination desk with a seat in front so that placing them in rows was an economical consideration. They came in different sizes which was fine except that you couldn't always match the size of the desk with the number of pupils of that particular size in the school.

I boarded with Mr. and Mrs. Soren Fredricksen for the first year and a half. They lived about a mile and a half west of the school with the house being about a quarter mile from the road back on a rise. I was fortunate in that the four Stoll children, Frank, John, Marjorie and Aleda drove in a buggy (or sleigh in winter) and they kindly picked me up each day. I should add that in winter, on a few occasions when the road was not passable for horses, it wasn't an easy walk.

Three incidents about the Fredricksens remain in my mind. One day we started out for Wembley, when Mrs. Fredricksen asked Soren if he 'had his Wheat' -- it seems there was a seed fair on that Saturday. He had forgotten all about it so he went to the granary and came back with half a sack. He entered it that way -- didn't even clean it -- and came second only to Herman Trelle, then World Wheat King. (Incidentally, I recall him keeping the

threshing crew waiting days in the field, while every morning he would go out, gather a sample of wheat, take it to the elevator for moisture testing and not until he was ready would they start up that threshing unit. But it paid off -- his wheat graded number one Hard and was sold direct to the Ogilvie Flour Mills.)

On another occasion, soon after I began living with them, I asked if he weren't going to lock the house door as we left for town. He replied that he had once locked it and someone came and couldn't get in so he threw the key down the well.

Speaking of the well, he had a deep well powered with a windmill with a large cistern about 15 feet deep nearby. (This was the "well" just referred to.) In the winter he would gradually fill this cistern and let it freeze so that he'd have ice all summer as a "cooler" for meat. One day, I heard a most peculiar sound -- a sort of continuing muffled groaning or calling. On checking around the farmyard, here was Soren down the "well" hollering his head off. He had jumped down on the ice level about three feet below the ground surface, but it was not solid and only a few inches thick. He had formed a hole as we went through that layer, with his feet landing on a lower level, but down to his armpits on the first level. Here he was, calling for help -- I don't know how long he had been down there. We got some ropes and helped him out -- a very cold Dane muttering "jumping codfish, jumping codfish...".

Christmas Concerts were a major effort in those days and each December considerable effort was expended in training students as everyone was to take part. After each concert, gifts were distributed and obtaining a "Santa Claus" that could not be identified was a major task of the teacher. I was fortunate in obtaining the ideal man. Father McGuire held church service at Dimsdale from time to time so he knew some of the students. He agreed to my request and I supplied him with an incident that had occurred to each student. How he remembered them, I don't know, but he certainly had the students baffled -- both as to who he was and how he knew what they had been up to -- and even the older ones couldn't figure it out.

The teacher was expected to be involved in various community activities and I remember with pleasure association with a group which we named "The Dimsdale Dramatic Society". The play produced was "Halfway to Hades". I can't recall all who were in it, but we met regularly at the old Dimsdale Community Hall and presented the play somewhere near Easter. In order to get the "bugs" out of it before playing to our local audience, we presented it first to Wembley. It went over well there and the next week went over very well in Dimsdale, but some people were quite annoyed that it hadn't been presented first in Dimsdale, not realizing the reason for the timing.

I believe the students in the old Wapiti School did quite well although looking back on it with my limited experience, I probably learned more than they did. But in the summer of 1935 after two and a half years at Wapiti, I resigned to take over the senior room and principalship of the school at Elmworth.

After teaching school in other parts of the Grande Prairie districts, I then enrolled at the University of Alberta, majoring in physics. I graduated in 1941 and entered the Meteorological Service of Canada. For four years I was a Senior Meteorological Officer with the RCAF and RAF at Service Flying Training Schools of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. After the war, I rejoined the Canadian Weather Service and after almost 35 years (including 18 years in charge of the Calgary Forecast Office and nine years in charge of the Victoria office) retired in 1975. Currently, I live in Victoria, B.C. but am still active in several pursuits. I am married to the former Alice Fleming of Edmonton and we have two daughters, Donna, in Calgary, and Mrs. P.R. (Shirley) Shires of Langley, B.C.

Donald McQueen Noyes

submitted by his family

Donald McQueen Noyes was born on June 1, 1893, at Anoka, Minnesota. His older brother, Jack, read about a big land boom in the Peace River country and talked our father into joining him on the trip north with the idea that Don would return to North Dakota and Jack would stay in the Peace. They travelled by train to Edson, then walked the Edson Trail to Grande Prairie in July of 1913; the trip taking 13 days. They registered at the old Murray Hotel and paid for their room and board by milking cows and doing chores for I.V. Macklin and also splitting wood for the hotel. Soon after arrival at Grande Prairie, due to illness in the family, Jack returned to North Dakota. Don decided to stay in the Peace River country and homestead. His first winter was spent living in a tent and working for I.V. Macklin. He homesteaded the NE 31-70-7-W6M (known for many years as the Cahoon place) and built a small log house.

About the time of the first world war (being refused for service for medical reasons) he sold this quarter to the VLA then purchased three quarters of Section 6-71-7-W6 from John Eisenman. In more recent years, he purchased the Brown, Bradley and Brumpton quarters. In 1928, he moved an existing loghouse using sixteen horses, from the NW 6-71-7-W6 which was then the homesite.

During the 1920's he homesteaded a quarter section south of the Bain homestead, along the Wapiti River. He sold it to George Stephen in the late 1940's. During the 1920's he ran a small sawmill south of Jack Murray's homestead and at various times during the depression hauled coal from the Spring Creek and Wapiti Coal Mines. In about 1920, he bought an International tractor and threshing machine, also an 18-36 Hart Parr tractor and 30" Waterloo threshing machine.

In 1928, he married Anne Pickles, daughter of Sam Pickles, who lived on the adjoining farm (rented from Hugh Thompson). They were married in the United Church at Wembley by Rev. Truax. Sam Pickles later purchased a farm directly south of the Grande Prairie airport and farmed there until the late 1940's. That farm was purchased by his son, Frank.



Left to right: Erwin, Don Sr., Florence, Harold, Muriel, Ann, and Grant Noyes. (Don Jr. missing).



Don Noyes breaking the sod.

Dad had a model T. Ford in 1924, the first automobile in the area. It was used for a lot of hospital trips from the area to Grande Prairie.

Dad spent considerable time on the Wapiti School Board, along with Jack McIntosh and George Stoll. Upon the school district being incorporated into the Grande Prairie School Division, he became a trustee of that school board for many years.

There were six children born to Don and Anne Noyes, being Donald William, Harold Douglas, Leila Meriel (Anderson), Grant Llewellyn, deceased, Florence Helene (Dorcheid), and Erwin Lewis. Donald, Harold, Florence and Erwin presently reside in Calgary, while Meriel resides in South Burnaby, B.C.

Fred Redmond

I came to the Peace River country in September 1935. I was at Buffalo Lakes that fall for harvest, but returned in the spring of 1936. I came to the Dimsdale area in 1938, and took to farming, as in those days there was nothing else for a young fellow to do. I farmed NE 15-71-7W-6. I joined the Army in 1940. I came back to the farm in the spring of 1946. My dad looked after the farm while I was away in the army.



Fred, Lil and Pat Redmond.



Fred Redmond and his father with the team.

I got married in Manchester, England in February 1942. My wife was a war bride, and she came to Canada in 1946, in June with daughter Pat. We arrived here from Welland, Ontario in 1935 and have been in the country ever since, except for the years spent in the army.

Evelyn Roberts

When I came to Dimsdale in 1931 my plans were to enter the Sisters of Charity Convent in Halifax the following August, after I had reached the age of twenty-one years. It was a teaching and nursing order and the preparation for perpetual vows took nine years. My original plans materialized, but by the time the nine years had elapsed I had no doubt that I needed more freedom to use my own initiative, so I did not take final vows. It was in August of 1941, that I returned to the school and the community which I had enjoyed so much ten years earlier.

Jack McIntosh, the secretary-treasurer of Wapiti School met me at the Dimsdale railway stop when I first came to Dimsdale. I had come from Edmonton and although I had been teaching for two years, my possessions were few. A small trunk and suitcase were loaded on either a "Bennett Buggy" or a wagon and we set off for the home of Janet and Soren Fredericksen. Jack told me that I would be boarding with this couple whom he described as the "bride and groom" of the district. At my first school in Freedom (near Westlock) I had boarded with an elderly widow, her widower son and his two little daughters. Although I had enjoyed living with this family, I thought as we went along that it might be a pleasant change to board with a young couple.

The Fredricksen's home was a little over a mile from the school. The little white frame house, with the tiny sod-roofed original homesteading log cabin still standing nearby was dwarfed by a huge windmill. The Fredricksens greeted us warmly, Janet with her snow white hair was about my height, five feet zero. Soren, who had been a member of the Danish Royal Guard was well over six feet tall. It was true that they were the bride and groom of the district, but they did not fit my stereotype visualization of a couple under 30 years of age. We became very good friends and I learned a great deal from each of them. They were a childless couple, but their devotion to the MacAlister family was lovely to observe.

When I returned to Dimsdale in 1941 the new schoolhouse had a teacherage nearby, so I lived there, but visited with Janet and Soren often.

The opening of the school in 1931 dispelled my brief feeling of homesickness. A delightful group of earnest students varied in their abilities as far as learning was concerned but I recall a high degree of co-operativeness and concern for one another. They truly reflected the attitudes of their parents and other adults in the community.

Nell Lewis was the senior student and was in grade nine. Years later (in the 1950's) when Nell had temporarily discontinued teaching, we met in Vancouver. In recalling the olden days, Nell described how anxious she had been to do well, when the school inspector had asked her to write about either Brutus or Caesar. By that time we both recognized that the inspector's visits were to assess the teacher's work rather than the students.

To return to 1931-32, we had very little playground equipment, but someone always had a bat and baseball at

the right season. I can recall some severe blows to my shins, my skills as a catcher were pretty limited. In winter and spring, snowballing was not officially permitted except on specially selected "battle" days. Then when a warm wind and thawing came, we would select sides, build forts, and fire away. I recall getting soaking wet, on the one or two days per year when this game occurred. The students were not exactly dry either. Looking back, I am sure that parents sometimes wondered about the teacher's judgement, but they were very patient. In spring when the weather was really balmy, we went on "nature trips" a version of modern day "field trips" removing our shoes and wading through ponds looking for tadpoles. We identified red-winged blackbirds, other birds and various flowers.

In May a heavy snowstorm stayed a day or two, so crumbs and grains were spread on the window sills for the birds. We had a good bird-watching session as a reward. While on the subject of window-sills, Myrtle Cowell (now Wagner) reminded me last fall of the time I was helped in through a window because a large dog had settled himself at the entrance of the porch while I was out and the boys in the class said he was a strange dog. They obviously enjoyed my gullibility as well as my fear of strange dogs.

The old school heater was also used to heat rocks and bricks for the floor of the cutters in which some children drove to school. Children too young to drive were often taken to school by their fathers. I rode with the Stewart family and I recall the youngest boy (was his name Jimmy?) being just as solicitous about me having a "foot warmer" the day he had received the strap as he had been other days. He was too young to drive, but his special responsibility each day seemed to be to see that the teacher did not get frozen feet. It's the only time I can recall using the strap that year, and it was following an ultimatum about swearing.

The snow had been so deep in the 1931-32 winter that short cuts were taken across the field over the fences. Spring brought deep ponds and near flooding. The Stewart boys rode horseback as did many other students, and I too had to learn to do so. Mr. Fredericksen lent me the smallest of his workhorses called Cream (pronounced CWEAM by Soren). The horn of the saddle must never have been the same again. Cream seemed to recognize my lack of experience and gave me many a fright sometimes going in circles and at other times galloping. Thanks to that saddle horn, I stayed on.

In 1941, the students at Wapiti seemed to have a more positive outlook on life, than many I had known in the East. On the whole, they seemed to have more inner security, based on more opportunities to have a sense of achievement. They had tasks and chores at home which gave them a sense of purpose.

When I returned in 1941, Jack McIntosh met me again, and told me that because the school trustees had thought I might find life in the teacherage lonely, Mary Brumpton's parents were willing to have her stay with me. Because of health problems, Mary had been out of school for a while, but wished to return. Mary was to do the janitorial work at the school. I do not recall the finanacial arrangement about the janitorial work, nor the amount for rent, Mary was to pay, or I was to pay for the teacherage. The plan was short-lived, because of Mary's health. However, during the time Mary and I shared the teacherage, her younger sister Betty had a birthday. Mrs. Brumpton very kindly sent us a generous portion of the birthday cake. Mary insisted that I keep the 5 cent piece and penny that were in my portion of the cake. I spent them for two three cent stamps which I needed for important business letters and I had no money left until pay day. When I told Mrs. Leslie about this years later, she immediately said she would have been glad to lend me money if she had known my situation. I did the caretaker work at the school and have not shovelled as much coal before or since. The boys were helpful removing ashes.

Ernie McAuley had been a hard working student in the school in 1931. In 1941, his brother Alfie and several of his sisters were in attendance. When Pearl Harbour was bombed I was not sure where it was and did not have an atlas to refer to at the teacherage. Alfie had a great interest in geography and in current events, so when I asked about the news and location, Alfie came to the rescue and pointed out Pearl Harbour without hesitation.

Not only were the boys in the school skilled at trapping mice, but several were good duck hunters. Keith Leslie was the first to shoot a wild goose as migration to the south began. I recall having a feast of roast goose at the Leslie home soon afterwards. The young hunters brought ducks and partridge to the teacherage for my use. With helpful hints and the loan of jars by some of their mothers, I was able to can a good deal of wild game for the winter.

There was no well at the school. Donald and Harold Noyes had the contract of bringing water (in five or ten gallon milk cans) for the school and teacherage. They were interested in many things and at times forgetful of chores. Perhaps they were too young for the responsibility. Anyway, we were short of water at times. In winter I melted snow. If the rabbits got there ahead of me the water went into the big barrel beside the kitchen stove and I started over again with fresh snow. When the snow was gone, I sometimes carried water from the Belfreys, who were my nearest neighbours.

Although I enjoyed teaching, I found teacherage life lonely, so I moved to Grande Prairie to teach in the high school there. Later I joined the Air Force, spending most of the service period in Ottawa and Gander, Newfoundland. I went to the University of British Columbia during 1945-48 and obtained a Masters Degree in Social Work. This provided me with an opportunity to continue working with young people and to get to know other parts of Canada. Some of my work involved teaching students who were entering the field of social work. I also had contact with medical students for several years.

John & Rina Roos & Family

We did not come here over the Edson Trail and we did not come in the early nineteen hundreds; however, you could call us the latter day settlers.

We were both born in Holland and the first we saw of Canada was the Canadian army tanks rattling down our streets during the second World War. We are thankful to the brave Canadian men who liberated Holland. Many gave their lives so we could have freedom. Dutch warbrides became instant Canadian relatives to their kinfolk and this started the immigration.

We both arrived in Lethbridge in the early 1950's and know what irrigation and sugarbeet fields are.

We met and married in Calgary and lived there for about 15 years. Our three children were born there and now for the last 12 years Dimsdale has been the place where we have our tent pitched.

The rolling country side with lots of trees and no irrigation to do appealed to us. However, during the first seven



John and Rina Roos and Family - 1976.
Left to right: Rina, Christina, Kelvin, Anita and John.

years, it would have been nice if we had had some irrigation as it was pretty dry in June. But we weathered the bad years and stuck it out. We have learned a lot and believe that the farm is a good place to bring up a family.

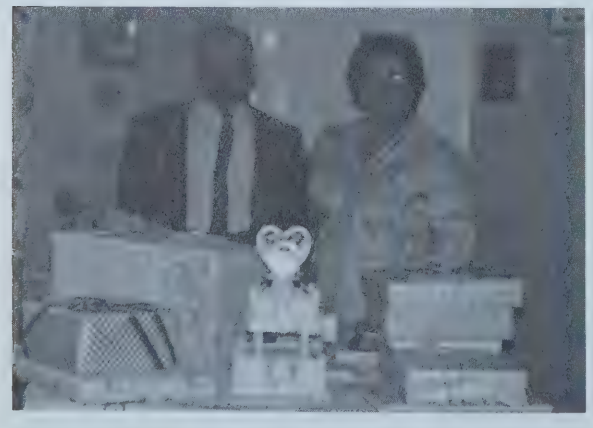
Gottlieb (Fred) And Katherine Schubert

We, Gottlieb and Katherine Schubert and our four daughters Grace, Erna, Norma, and Marleen, moved to the Peace River country from Barrhead, Alberta, April 24, 1954. We heard about the Peace River country from wife Katherine's folks, Adolf Sauder, who settled here in 1940. Reason for us moving somewhere else was, we only had one quarter section of land and needed more land to make a living on the farm.

I hired three trucks to move my furniture, machinery and cattle. I and the family followed in the car. It took around ten hours as roads from Smith to Valleyview were in bad shape. We had to check different times to see if cattle were okay. Was a long day for everyone.

Our farm (half section) was bought from Mr. Pat Croken, located six miles west of Grande Prairie, on No. 2 Highway. Our home was built from lumber.

My farming was done by tractor here. Our neighbors were Albert Stierle, Jack Robinson, Walter Konevecki and Oli Leirdahl.



Mr. and Mrs. G. Schubert's 25th wedding anniversary, June 15, 1965.

In 1954, when we came to this area, Faith Lutheran Church was built in Grande Prairie already. The pastor at that time was Rev. Kurt Bickell.

Our children went to Percy School. It was a two and a quarter mile walk. School dances were held quite often, and Christmas concerts, which we always looked forward to. Grande Prairie had a hospital, several doctors and dentists when we came to the area.

Our first wedding Grace (Lawrence) Wiebe in October, 1958, second, Erna (Ray) Paquette, in July, 1960.

In 1965, June 15, we, Gottlieb and Katharine, celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary on the farm. Third wedding, Marleen (Richard) Kirscht in October, 1966. Last wedding, Norma (Sieg) Shubert in October, 1968.

We sold the farm to Albert Stierle in 1969 and retired to Grande Prairie.



Left to right: Norma, Marlene, Erna and Grace Schubert in 1955.

Gavin Middleton Stephen

by Mrs. Louise Hanham (granddaughter)

Gavin Stephen was born in 1867 at Owen Sound, Grey County, Ontario. In 1917, Mr. Stephen and family, his wife, Mima, sons George and Wes, daughters Iola and Netta left their home in Fort Saskatchewan to come to the Peace River country. They came via train to Bluesky, where his family remained with his wife's folks until fall. Several horses and a team of mules were brought along on this move.

Mr. Stephen's first job was to manage the U.G.G. elevator in Grande Prairie. In 1921, he took on the managerial job for the first Co-op Store (situated where the York Hotel now stands). Because of his kind and gentle manner, he let out too much credit, consequently, the store operated only three or four years.

Mima Stephen passed away in the year of 1925. Iola was then 15 and Netta 12½ years old. The boys were grown and on their own. Even though Mr. Stephen was a very busy man, he tried to be both mother and father to his family. This he carried over into his later years when he had many grandchildren. Because they had no grandmother, he tried to do those special things for them; like always having treats, buying some desired piece of

clothing or making a special meal for them. He was greatly loved and respected by each of them.

Shortly after losing his wife, he moved to the Dimsdale district to manage the farm owned by Bob Currie - now owned by Ed McIntosh. He remained on this farm until approximately 1941, when he sold out to Stan and Irwin Agar and moved to the farm he purchased from Mr. Beauchan — now the Allan Grant farm — next to the Al Havelena farm.

Around the year of 1927, Mr. Stephen and his son George started up a sawmill at the Wapiti River, a place known as The Big Seven located just west of the present Procter and Gamble Cellulose plant. The mill operated continuously until the year of 1960 when George sold the mill and also his farm and moved to Vernon, B.C.

Around the year of 1944, Iola and husband Dick Greentree and family moved to the Stephen farm. Dick proceeded to take over most of the farming, most of which was done with eight head of horses in those early days.

During the war years, Mr. Stephen cleaned out the loft of his new big barn and allowed many a barn dance to be held therein, with all of the proceeds going to the Red Cross.

In his early years in the Peace River Country, Mr. Stephen was Superintendant of the McQueen's Presbyterian Church. After moving to the farm, he was for many years (until its closure) Superintendant of the Spring Creek Church just south of Dimsdale.

Even when there was no longer a church near enough to attend, Mr. Stephen always treated Sunday as a special day. Once the chores were done, he would put on his Sunday clothes, polish his shoes, etc. No field work was done on Sunday. His life was a testimony to all who came in contact with him. Even though he never said too much about the Lord he loved, his actions were in every way the actions of a Christian.

In his latter years, Mr. Stephen suffered greatly from arthritis but he never let this infirmity stop him from work. When he was 80 years old he helped take the crop off using the horses. He exercised his hands by splitting wood and caring for his large garden. Many beautiful flowers were grown in this garden. He was known affectionately to all the community as Grandpa Stephen.

Upon retirement Mr. Stephen moved down to a small cabin near Spring Creek one-quarter of a mile from the main house. He had many pets coming to his door to be fed, such as squirrels and many types of birds. He really enjoyed the whiskey-jacks.

The Alfred Stephenson Family

by the family

Alfred and Ann Stephenson were both born in Ireland. Alfred (Dad) came from a small village called Dromara, about twenty miles from Belfast in North Ireland. Ann (Mother) came from what was called Queens County at that time, close to the village of Rathdowney in Southern Ireland. When they married they settled on a farm close to a little town called Fethod in County Tipperary, Southern Ireland.

Before Dad and Mother were married, he had made an expedition to Canada in, as close as we can guess, the year 1897, or close to the turn of the century. He worked around Calgary and Ft. McLeod, and on the gang that laid the railroad tracks through the Crow's Nest Pass. Many times we have heard him describe being in Calgary when there were only a few wigwams.

While working at Ft. McLeod he was hospitalized with a very serious bout of typhoid fever. However, he returned to the Emerald Isle, married and produced us five - in order of birth - Mona, Jack, Caroline, Harold and Emily. Canada was still calling, however, and he had a longing to return to the big country.

Ireland during this time (as it still is) was very unsettled, religiously, and politically, with a rebellion brewing which finally broke between the years 1916 - 1921.

Dad and Mother, with their family, were forced out and the family divided coming to Canada, "bit by bit" as it were. Jack came first, finding work in Saskatchewan, then Mona and Carrie came to Vancouver where we had aunts and cousins. Harold came next to the farm at Regina which Jack had rented by this time. Last to come were Dad, Mother and Emily who had been living at Downpatrick, North Ireland, during this time, waiting for a settlement from the English government re the farm, livestock, furniture, etc. This settlement was known as compensation. Dad made many trips from Ireland to London while the courts were processing his claim.

Now at last we were all together in Canada, the two girls having come to Regina from Vancouver. This was in the year 1924.

When Dad was in Canada the first time, he had heard a rumour of a beautiful land in the great Peace River country. He was a pioneer at heart, so set out to gain some information about the Peace.

Luck was with him as there was a man teaching school close to Regina, J.L. McIntosh, who had a farm at Dimsdale and later became our neighbor, when he moved back to Dimsdale permanently. The family talked things over and Jack again broke trail by coming to the Dimsdale district first.

Mr. McIntosh had recommended that he contact Mr. Bill Belfry, which he did. Just half a mile from the Belfry farm was a half section owned by a Bill Charles, which we rented for a year and then bought. Dad, Jack and Harold also took a homestead each in the Millarston district south of the home farm.

To get back to the move to our new home, Dad, Mother, Mona, Caroline and Emily all came on the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia (fondly known as the ED & BC) railroad passenger train, and a long trip it was.

Harold travelled with the livestock, equipment and machinery, also two dogs. At least there were two dogs when he left Regina but by the time they reached Calgary a litter of puppies were added passengers. This freight train took a week in arriving at Grande Prairie. Anyway, we all arrived safely and began moving into the log house on the farm.

When in Regina, we had been told that the car we had, a McLaughlin Buick, would be useless in the Peace, so it was disposed of and we became the owners of a Model-T Ford which was often mired in the good Peace "gumbo" and pushed gaily home. Speaking of cars, this same Mr. Belfry previously mentioned, used to fill his tires with wheat, take a funnel and pour water into the tire which caused the grain to swell. This worked well for a while, but one day on the main street in Grande Prairie, he had a blow out and wheat scattered in all directions. Everyone had their own method of beating the hard times!



Alf Stephenson on tractor.

Two or three years later Jack bought the half section directly west of home called the Crummy place and a year or two after that bought the land known as the Lucy farm a mile further west.

It should be mentioned here, Dad was very modern machine minded and owned one of the first combines to operate in the Peace. This machine was a Gleaner Baldwin.

There was plenty of entertainment in the Community - picnics, dances, fowl suppers, card parties, box socials, horse-back riding, skating on Spring Lake, which by the way, was a pretty little lake located partially on our farm. We produced a three act play every winter, taking it to different places such as Wembley, Flying Shot and La Glace. Also there were school picnics as Emily attended the Wapiti School No. 2802 for some years.

As the years passed, we all married. Mona married James Smith of the Wembley district, and their family consisted of three girls, Jean, Anne and Patricia.

Jack married Jean Conley of the Flying Shot district, and their family is Alfred and Sharon.

Caroline married Donald MacDonald of the Wembley district, and their children are Donald and Marion.

Harold married Winnifred Tissington, of the Flying Shot district, and their children are Irene, Derril and Kay.

Emily married Joe Lewis of the Dimsdale district, and their children are David and Douglas, (twins) Brian and Barbara (twins) and Leslie.

We have all made our homes in the Peace with the exception of Caroline whose home is in Edmonton. Mona and Caroline are both now widowed.

Jack sold out in 1964, moving to Penticton, B.C. but the call of the Peace River Country must have been strong as he and Jean returned a few years later to make their home in Grande Prairie.

Mona, Harold, and Emily all live in the city of Grande Prairie. Harold and Winnie who had the home farm sold and moved into the city in 1975.

Mother passed away in 1951, Dad in 1958, but they had achieved their wish of living in the Peace for the rest of their days.

Those were happy times for all of us and not one of us has ever regretted being one of the settlers in the Land of the Mighty Peace.

John T. Stewart and Family

John T. Stewart came to Canada from Scotland as a young boy, living in Montreal for sometime. He then moved to Ontario, where he met and married Kathleen Parker who came from Elora, Ontario. John was overseas from 1914 to 1918. He had two children when he left and one on the way.

On the way back to Canada, John met a fellow who was going farming in Northern Alberta under soldier settlement. It seemed like a good idea, so John, his wife, two daughters and one son left St. Johns, New Brunswick. They travelled by train through Edmonton, then up to Grande Prairie, taking nearly three weeks to travel and arriving in July, 1918.

He bought a soldiers settlement farm, eleven miles west of Grande Prairie.

John and Kate had five children, John, Margaret, Edith, Gordon and Mina. Mina died in 1922 from diabetes a few months before insulin was discovered. Mina is buried at (Flying Shot) Spring Creek cemetery.

The homestead house was of logs, heating the house with wood which was cut at homestead ten miles away from farm.

John T. was a steam fitter. When he worked too far away, a hired man was hired when the children were too young to help. Power used to farm was horses.

Neighbors were: Mr. and Mrs. George Stoll, Mr. and Mrs. Ross Beatty, Mr. and Mrs. George Jebb, William Kane, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Clubine, Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Kennedy, William and Alex Craig.

Sundays were mostly spent resting after a hard week's work.

The George Stoll Family

by Frank Stoll

George Mitchell Stoll arrived at Lake Saskatoon on June 2, 1910, along with his brother Charles. George filed on NE 13-71-8-W6, while Charles filed on NW 18-71-7-W6. They had travelled over the Long Trail, via Grouard, by ox team, coming into the area when the grass was lush and the wild flowers and fruit trees were coming into bloom along the creek. Having spent the previous few years as cowboys in the state of Montana, they decided their homesteads were ideal for the raising of livestock. A shack, barn and corrals were built of logs, some land broken and wild hay stacked that first summer, so they were prepared for winter.

My father, George, made his first of many trips to Edmonton; and later when the Edson Trail came into being, driving horses along with Leo Ferguson, freighting in supplies for Revillion Freres, traders at Lake Saskatoon. He also freighted two safes for the Canadian Bank of Commerce. One is now at the Beaverlodge Pioneer Museum.

They camped out on occasion on these trips, but more often they could travel between stopping places each day. On one such trip when Bob Shaw was in their party, their bacon was stolen from their grub box. This caused some concern. Bob, who had a wooden leg and smoked a "plug" tobacco in his pipe, was sitting in the bunkhouse paring off tobacco. He exclaimed, "If I could just catch the ---- who stole our bacon," and for emphasis, jabbed his knife into his leg for all to see. The next morning most of their bacon was back in their grub box.

At times the going got rough. Some of their trips were cold, and they were slowed down by a lot of snow. One

time they got wet feet from walking behind the sleigh in the overflow on Sturgeon Lake, to keep warm. A frozen foot for Dad eventually ended in a big toe being amputated.



Mrs. Theresa Stoll, John and Frank about 1922.



Left to right: John, Aleda, Marjorie, Frank and George (sitting).

In 1916, with the arrival of the railway to Grande Prairie, Theresa Smith came from Toronto to visit her sister, Mrs. Percy Clubine. While here, she met and married George Stoll, never to return to Toronto again. Four children were born of this marriage, John, myself (Frank), Marjorie and Aleda. The three older of us were born in the log house which still stands on that farm, while Aleda was born in the old log Grande Prairie Hospital. The year 1916 was also the year my parents decided to modernize their farm power by changing from oxen to horses.

Throughout these years to about 1923, while the homesteads were being developed, ball teams were organized for sport, along with an annual fair at Lake Saskatoon. The Wapiti School district was formed about 1914, becoming a meeting centre, complete with ball team, ladies club and Christmas concerts. My father purchased the homestead of Charles Stoll in 1923 and Charles went back to his sheep ranching in Montana.

My father served many years on the school board and the fair board. He was an original contract signer with the Alberta Wheat Pool and a member of the Canadian Seed Growers Association. He grew Pedigreed seed throughout his farming career.

About 1923, he purchased the C.A. Williams farm at Pipestone Creek and with the help of the Schmidt brothers, farmed these three quarters until about 1937, when he again modernized by buying a tractor and threshing machine to supplement the horse power. My mother, Theresa, passed away in March of 1937, leaving Aleda at a fairly young age. Marjorie quit school to become housekeeper at about 15, John stayed home to help with extra chores, as well.

My father married Anna Dean when her daughter Margaret was a baby. He farmed from the original homestead until about 1950, selling it then and moving to his farm at Pipestone Creek. He raised cattle and developed this farm, selling to O. Schadeck in 1961, and moving to Grande Prairie where he passed away, November 5, 1978 at 91 years.

After the purchase of the Williams farm, my father spent quite a lot of time away from home, leaving cows to milk and pigs to feed, chickens to feed, for my city-born-and-raised mother. I can remember how she dreaded milking time and many other chores because usually the cows were quite wild and I think as terrified of her as she was of them. However, we grew up a bit and took over those duties which she was happy to relinquish.

A regular winter chore along with wood cutting and ice cutting was hauling feed from the Pipestone Creek farm to the home place. For this job, my father built a special large rack pulled usually by four, but often six, horses. Some years the coyotes were quite abundant and the snow was deep. His dog, Rowdy, who made all of the feed haul trips, too, would run down and kill a number of coyotes each winter. My father used to sell the hides and I remember him trading one for a double Hudson Bay blanket once.

Before the railroad reached Wembley, grain was hauled by horse and sleigh to Grande Prairie, usually with large tank boxes and four horses. Our farm became a stopping place for some of the farmers from the Halcourt area to the west. The trip was something like this; from Halcourt to my father's farm, one day, stay over night; to Grande Prairie, unload, shop and return to my father's farm for overnight and back to Halcourt the next day. Sometimes these farmers made two such trips a week and

some of the local farmers would often hire out to haul grain during slack winter season.

Threshing in the earlier years was quite often done in the winter time. Farmers would have stacked their entire crop to wait for the threshers to come when it was their turn. It was very hard on the homesteader who had the threshers for field threshing when the rains came. They were eaten almost out of house and home as their winter's supply of feed would disappear, if the rain delayed threshing for very long.

Another winter chore that involved the neighbors and stymied cabin fever was the passage from farm to farm of the wood sawing outfit. Each farm would have a pile of wood in poles and the rig would come, usually owned by a bachelor neighbor, and all the neighbors would gather to visit and cut the wood into stove length pieces. Later, it was split and dried for next season's fuel supply. The next day would be another neighbor's turn and so on until spring. Usually the bachelor sawyer would go home fat and happy after enjoying the good cooking of all the farm wives.

My father bought his first Model A Ford in 1929, and going for a ride was a real thrill. He was not very mechanically inclined, so had problems starting it and driving it. After knocking down a few gates and learning that it had to be "choked" to start, he became a fairly good driver and our perimeter of neighbors and shopping broadened considerably. The car was pensioned off about 1954, after being faithful for so many years.

In the growing of pedigreed seed certain precautions had to be taken so the seed would not become contaminated with weeds or other varieties of seeds. This meant careful cleaning of all storage and cleaning equipment, and all the seed had to be hand loaded onto box cars for shipment as the elevators could not be cleaned satisfactorily. I remember working with neighbors and loading a 2000 bushel carload of seed each day, sometimes for a period of three weeks. Each farmer had a "four-up" on a 200 bushel tank and would perhaps make two trips to Wembley each day to unload into the boxcar. Five neighbors were usually the crew. Such a lot of shovelling!



George and Anna Stoll.

The Seath Sutherland Story

by Seath Sutherland

I was born at Central Bedeque, Prince Edward Island, on August 30, 1906. We moved to the Regina country in 1911. My father was a storekeeper and died when I was nine years old. Helen was born in Brighton, Sussex, England and came to Canada with her parents in 1910.

I first heard about the Peace River Country from J.L. (Jack) McIntosh who taught at a school just east of Regina, Saskatchewan. He had been up here and bought land in 1920. The land was the Van Horne place on the north side of Spring Lake. As far as the reason for coming up here, land in the Regina plains in Saskatchewan was selling for $100 per acre at that time. As far as opportunities go, free land ($10) per quarter was one of them as we had a limited amount of capital. I arrived at Dimsdale by train on the 12th day of November, 1926. At that time there was only a small station at that point. Helen arrived here on December 11, 1926 in a blinding rainstorm and I don't think first impressions were very good.

In the ensuing years I worked for W. Belfry, Soren Fredricksen, Sam Pickles, Don Noyes and Jack Stephenson. In March, 1927 I filed on SW 32-70-7-W6 which, by the way, we still own. In 1928 we moved to our homestead and proceeded to become homesteaders.

Our first home was a log building with a shingled roof and later on two additions were added at separate times. From 1928 to 1944 we cleared up more land and rented some and got a few head of cattle. As well, I worked out summer and winter, working on the railroad grade from Wembley to Hythe with a team of horses and a dump wagon and hauling coal from the Wapiti Mines on the river bank. The mines belonged to such people as W. Loskill, Nick Schneider, Frank Maus, Hughie Campbell, Ole Augustine, Hughie Sinclair and the Mitchell Brothers.

In the early thirties we formed a school district which resulted in the Millarston School being built. Maclean and Mercer, two Wembley carpenters built the log school. Iain MacAlister supplied the logs and I supplied the foundation and cleared the road as there was windfall, spruce and big poplar, on the right of way. The first school board was J.B. LaPlace, A.M. MacAlister and John George. The next year I was elected to the board and remained a member of the board until 1944 when we moved to the Wapiti School District. At one time there were over 30 children in the Millarston School. There were various denomination churches held Sunday School in the Millarston School.

During the period 1927 to 1944 there were ten children born to our family — John, Max, Shirley, Jim, Joan, Laverne, Ruth, Myret, Hugh and Brian. Anne and Ross were born in the Wapiti district.

In 1944 we rented the W. Belfry land, three quarter sections one and a half miles west of Dimsdale and our children went to the Wapiti school a half mile south of our place and the high school pupils went to Wembley or Grande Prairie. We stayed on the Belfry place for three years and then moved to the Thompson place for six years. We then bought the Soren Fredricksen place, N½ 7-71-7-W6, and have lived here ever since. In fact, we are the oldest Oldtimers living in the Dimsdale district. Many of the families that were here when we came are gone — the Noyes, Fredricksens, Agars, Johnstons, Stephensons, Stolls, Brumptons and MacAuleys.



Sutherland Family Reunion held at Dimsdale Hall, August 15, 1971. Three missing - Mary, Lana and Kelly.



J. Seath Sutherland and family, August 15, 1971.
front left to right: Brian, Myret, Jim, John, Max, Hugh, Anne, Ross.
Front left to right: LaVerne, Shirley, Mrs. Sutherland, Mr. Sutherland, Joan and Ruth.

From 1944 to 1964 I was a member of the Wapiti and Wembley School Boards. From 1967 to 1977 I was County Councillor for the Dimsdale area. I was also on the board of Grande Prairie Livestock Shipping Association for over 20 years and president of the Bear Lake Mutual Telephone for six years.

We celebrated our golden wedding anniversary on November 6, 1976 with all our immediate family there but two — Ruth and Joan. There were 40 grandchildren there (five couldn't make it) and seven great-grandchildren.

We are still enjoying good health in January, 1979.

The Ed Van Horne Family

by Rena Van Horne

My family, the Frank Johnstons, first heard about the Peace River district while living in Lacombe in the fall of 1908. Dad, being a gypsy at heart, decided to go see first hand if the article in the Edmonton paper was true.

Dad wanted more land for the boys and there wasn't any available at Lacombe. He had the South African Scrip to use. Scrips were given to the British and Canadian veterans after the war. Holders were entitled to one half section to either file and prove up, or sell.

Dad stayed in the north until July or August. He had gone down onto the prairie not really caring for it, at Spirit River, and looked at available land, some not even being surveyed as yet. He decided where he would like to settle, was along the Pipestone Creek. He got sawed logs from the mill on the Wapiti and George Garnet built him a barn, house and store room for supplies.

Dad came back to Lacombe, sold our place, got things ready for the family to go north. He bought one scrip for himself and one each for Mother, Ray, Ralph and Nina. He paid $2500 for each. We left Lacombe on January 31, 1910. We were six weeks on the trail, covering 600 miles. I remember Dad coming in the house a day or so after we got there with a tag pinned to his shirt for St. Patrick's Day.

Transportation was, of course, horses or oxen, which pulled the sleds and cabooses. It took six weeks from Lacombe to Pipestone Creek. Our route was from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing, up the Athabasca River, across Lesser Slave Lake to Grouard, across country to Sturgeon Lake, along the Simonette River, which we crossed and then went down the Smoky to Bezanson Landing.

Then Dad and the boys took up homesteads, also. After getting there, the boys didn't like the location at

Pipestone. The land had burned over and they thought it wouldn't be good, but it turned out that it was real good, rich land. They scouted around and all went over to Spring Lake (now Dimsdale) and settled there.

My husband, James Edward Van Horne, filed on a homestead located on SE 21-71-7-W6. The filing fee was $10. It was registered May 26, 1910, and was on the north shore of Spring Lake. Walter McFarlane was the surveyor. We sold this homestead about two or three years before leaving the Peace River Country. McIntosh bought it. The quarter section between Ed's and Dad's was Spring Lake. This little lake was just for the ducks and muskrats.

Ed and I were married on October 24, 1912, by the Reverend Forbes, the most wonderful man who ever lived. We lived in Lake Saskatoon and operated a restaurant we bought from Jack and Alice Sutherland until the spring of 1914. Then we went to our homestead at Spring Lake. Our first home there was a log cabin about 14 by 24 feet, all one room, with a sod roof, small window on the west, and one small one on the east. It did have a wood floor. A bunk was built in one end. Ed built this in the summer of 1910, as he lived there before we were married. There were no locks, of course. Nobody but honest people went into that country and everyone stuck together, just like one big family. Some fellow had to leave part of his stuff along the trail — a big snowstorm was coming. Some Indians came by and he asked them if it would be alright there, and they said, "Sure, there's not another white man within 20 miles."

We didn't do much visiting in winters because it was too darn cold and in the early winters, so much of the time a lot of the men were out on the trail bringing in supplies. They had to go to Edmonton, about 500 miles away. They were usually gone a couple of months, sometimes a bit longer.

To take supplies in on our original trip, Garnet gave Dad a list. I wish I'd kept it. There was so much flour, sugar, rice, beans, and so forth, per person. Dad never went out for supplies, the boys did, but Dad did go out the winter of 1912 to the Edmonton hospital with a broken ankle, and stayed several months.



Van Horne's Maxwell car. Circa 1915-1923.

The spring of 1915, we bought the sawmill and moved to the Wapiti. There was a house, bunkhouse, icehouse (not very darn big), a blacksmith shop and the mill. We bought it from Billy English and Jim Evans. The icehouse was for food storage. We would cut out blocks of ice in the winter, from the Wapiti, carry them into the icehouse and stack them. Thus we had a refrigerator for six months of the summer.

Some of the men who worked for us were: Al Johnson, Bill Hosker, Jack Young, Ed Phelps, Hans Molline, Charlie Thrasher, Fred Bodine, Dad Williams, Charlie Cline, Harold Anderson, Walter Chapman, Bill Morley and, of course, Dad and my brother, Ralph Johnston.

In the summer of 1915, Harry Adair was going to ship oats to Peace River Crossing. He had Charlie Boyd and Barba build him some scows to float them down the river. They had one scow built, another partly, when there was a cloud burst up in the mountains. It raised the Wapiti. He had the oats piled on the river bank by our place. When we got up that Sunday morning, the ol' river was rising clear up over the bank, so a bunch of the boys got the scows in the river, tied them up tight to the bank, got in what they could of the oats, but the water was rising so fast the sacks of oats started floating away down across the flat.

We got word by horseback up to Adair - 20 or 30 miles away - and told him, so he came down. I can see him yet, standing there, the water high over the bank, looking very disgusted.

Then, out came the favorite expression he always resorted to when anything went wrong, "By doggies, why didn't the pigs eat me, when I was little?"

The river kept coming up. Ed set a stake and every little while, he would move the stake back to dry land. We started to pack everything we could. Charlie Boyd harnessed the team, brought the wagon around to the kitchen door. If Ed was to move the stake one more time, it would then be time to move out. It just lapped in under the doorstep, so we stayed put. That was the highest we ever saw the Wapiti. It must have been at least 12 or 15 feet that it raised in those few hours.

I tell you, those oats went down on the flat and a lot of them got covered with sand as the water went down. That summer, the Van Horne hogs lived high off the oats at Harry's expense. With the oats fermented, we had some lively pigs.

We just kept a skeleton crew in the winter, and mostly cut logs in the winter and cold decked them. Then when break-up came, they'd float the logs down river to the boom which we built to contain the logs at the mill.

I cooked for 18 to 30 men, three meals a day. We killed a lot of moose and bought some beef for or meat. Caught a lot of fish, too. I would bake 26 loaves of bread at one time, all by hand in those days. We had our own cow for milk, but bought butter and eggs from the farm women. Most of the men would go home on the weekends.

Our first daughter, Margaret Ethel, was born in June of 1916, and for this birth I went to my mother's where Dr. Bradford delivered her. Our second daughter, Evelyn Marjorie, was born in June of 1918. Our third daughter, Geraldine May, was born in August of 1919. Our fourth daughter, Velma Irene was born in December of 1920. The latter three were born in the Wapiti River home. Dr. McDonald was our doctor for Evelyn and May, and Dr. Scott was our doctor for Velma. They each made it to our house - after the child was born! It was 42 degrees below zero when Velma was born.

When May was born, someone went for the doctor. Mrs. McDonald told him, "Hurry, hurry, get your clothes on." The doctor replied, "I don't need to hurry, that baby will be born before I can get there, anyway." Sure enough, she was.

We sold the mill in 1920. We had bought sheep in 1918. Ran around two thousand head. We didn't have a sheep drive to market. We used to take the lambs in wagons to

Grande Prairie and ship them to Edmonton for the August market. We had three thousand head of lambs in the spring of - I believe - 1923. The lambs contracted a disease and we lost a thousand at one time, and some of the ewes, too. The loss of this much of our flock, and the fact of no school in the Wapiti River area, were deciding factors in our leaving the north country. With four children soon to be school age, and the nearest school in the Prairie, this meant no schooling, or we would have had to board them out, or I'd have had to go to Lake Saskatoon and stay during the week.

Another factor was that Ed got the 'flu' very bad in the spring of 1921, and when he recovered, he had arthritis. Dr. Carlisle told him to get out of the north country, he needed a warmer climate.

In October of 1923, we moved to the State of Washington.

The Bev Van Schaick Family

by Bev Van Schaick

Our story begins September 1, 1958, when we were married at Northfield Lutheran Church north of LaGlace, Alberta. Since that date, we have seen many changes in our family, as well as in the country and the way of life. One example is the roads. We had just had a high graded road for a little while and had no gravel yet. After a rain, when the sun came the mud would roll up around your wheels and plug the fenders. Such was the case when I was trying to get to our wedding and I was ¾ hour late getting there, because we had to pry mud out and go a few feet and pry again. I think Frances may have felt she was going to be jilted at the altar.

It seems so much more convenient to live on a farm now than when we were kids. Things like electricity, phone, gas coming, school bus to the door, snow-plowed roads, gravel, and good recreational facilities close by, make life very pleasant.

My wife Frances is the daughter of Kate and Rudolph Johnson of LaGlace. We have been blessed with 4 children, Cathy born February 14, 1960, Bonnie, December 23, 1961, Allan, February 1, 1965 and Wendy, October 17, 1968.



Frances and Bev Van Schaick with children Cathy, Allan, Bonnie and baby Wendy.

Communities have also changed. Before all-weather roads came into existence in the early 1950's, your community was your immediate area. Now our children go to schools in Beaverlodge and Wembley. Our church is in Grande Prairie. Our recreation, Dimsdale, Wembley and Grande Prairie. Our business is done in Wembley, Grande Prairie and Sexsmith. Now many people haven't got what they can call a home community.

Floyd Raymond Van Schaick Family

by F.R.V.

I was born in April, 1898, in South Dakota. I came to Alberta in 1905, paused at Wetaskiwin and Camrose, trekked to Vermilion by Daysland and Viking where the CPR grade was being built in 1908 and on to Greenlawn, St. Paul and Vermilion.

In June 1912 we left Islay with two cars of cattle and machinery for Edson. We left Edson on the twenty-first with two wagons pulled by oxen; one mower pulled by two two-year old colts and driven by Chester; one horse ridden by Glen, driving 14 head of cows and heifers. Forty-five muddy days later we camped on the north side of Richmond Hill, then known as Flying Shot Ridge. A great scurry to put up hay and buildings.

I made two winter trips to Edson. In 1916 I homesteaded NE 36-70-8-W6. The next June I wrote grade VIII exams in Grande Prairie, having taken classes under Mrs. Maude Clifford at the Wapiti school which opened in 1913. She was a great teacher, and the wife of Harry B.



Floyd and Nan (Agnes) Van Schaick.



Jean and Floyd Van Schaick.

Clifford, an early fur trader (about 1906) in the Flying Shot district. To quote from Pioneers of the Peace, she "not only was the first pioneer white woman in the district, she was also the best loved...".

That fall, 1917, I went to Camrose to high school and the next spring I enlisted in the infantry and went overseas. When war ended I transferred to the Khaki College at Ripon, Yorkshire. After a few weeks, I was given a high school certificate which was not worth the ink on the paper. In the fall of 1919, I entered Brandon College, a Baptist outpost of McMaster University, now Brandon University. Five years later I left with a degree. After a number of years teaching, I arrived at Wetaskiwin High School to teach science. There I met and married Agnes Irvine.

In 1933, we started to farm my homestead with nothing. We had one child which did not live long. Later we adopted two children, Sylvia who now works in Grande Prairie and Beverley who lives on the farm.

During the next twenty years, I was able to install water, electricity (32 volt) and propane, also buy two marginal quarter sections. With Beverley as partner we have been able to round this into Roseley Farms, two sections of land with good buildings, machinery and a herd of cattle. Natural gas is now on the way.

For about twenty-five years, I worked with the United Church in Wembley, holding about every office. I was on the board of the U.F.A. as secretary for sometime, and about ten years with the Bear Lake R.E.A.L., helping to bring power to all farms. Also with telephone.

In 1920, while camped down by the creek, breaking land to get patents to homestead, I held a church service in John Watson's home. In July 1913 the Presbyterian Church at Spring Creek was opened by Reverend A. Forbes.

In 1968 we started going to Victoria for the winter. Since Nan died of cancer, I married Jean Bunyan. Jean and I have continued going away for the winter. Beverley and his wife, Frances, and their four children take care of things at the farm.

Glen Eugene Van Schaick

When I was a young man, I lived on my parent's farm and hauled coal or worked out whenever there was a job. I often worked for Mr. I.V. Macklin on his dairy farm and delivered milk for him.

Beatrice Binks and I were married December 17, 1928. I worked wherever I could, hauled wood and ice, worked at farms and was away most of the time. My wife, Beatrice, had no place to go and didn't see many other people.

When we first moved to town, we rented a house and Beatrice took in boarders. We had five girls rooming and two men just boarding. Later, we bought a small house in Grande Prairie and built onto it. After five years, we bought a larger house with a barn on the property so we had a cow and some horses. In the spring, I plowed gardens for about $3 each, then worked for the city hauling garbage for 15 years.

The war came and things began booming. I had to get a second team and that still wasn't fast enough, so I bought a truck. When tender was called, my bid was too high, so I lost the haul. Fortunately, I hired on with the plywood factory, now known as Canfor and worked there for 18 years before retiring.

While we lived on the farm, we had two sons, Raymond in 1931, and Alf in 1933. Ray went to college and became a Salvation Army officer and is now in Regina, Saskatchewan. He and his wife Elsie, have five children, Wes and Rick are married and each have a daughter. Howie is in university and Kevin and Lynn are in school.

Alf is in Grande Prairie and is working for Scott National. He and his wife Dorothy have three children. George works for Scott National also, and Dwayne and Linda are in school.

Our eldest daughter, Grace, went to university in Edmonton and taught school there. She and her husband, Don, have two girls; Kathy, who is working in Edmonton and Kim, who is in school.

Our daughter Ruth and her husband, Dave, moved to Edmonton and then to Ft. McMurray, but are now back in Grande Prairie. They have two girls, Kandace and Karie, both in school.

Recently, we celebrated our Golden Anniversary, with an open house, and all the family was home - our four children and their spouses, twelve grandchildren and two great grandchildren. We saw and had greetings from many old friends and will always regard that weekend with special feelings.



Left to right: Raymond, Grace, Alfred (standing), Glen, Ruth, and Beatrice.

The Van Sickle Family

by Edie Mattson

My grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Van Sickle, immigrated to Central Alberta by team and wagon in 1905 and homesteaded there. They owned two quarter sections of land, one section in Rimbey district and one in Ponoka district. They had only two sons, my dad, Elmer Van Sickle and my uncle Joe.

Ralph and I were born in Ponoka, at home. When I was about one and a half years old, my parents moved to the Peace River Country. That was in 1920 or 1921. My dad got the urge to move by reading the paper which said what a good farming country it was, good soil, grazing and so on. I am not sure, but I think we moved by team and wagon which took a long time.

We settled on a half section which had been owned by Mr. Bill Knorley and was purchased on crop payments by my dad. The house we lived in was just a large frame house, two bedrooms upstairs and a cellar. There was a large hip-roof barn. My dad was a lover of horses and most animals. He farmed with horses all his life. Always had a number of milking cows for our own use and always shipped cream. Our farm was located eight to ten miles west of Grande Prairie and two miles from the main highway, two miles from the Dimsdale store and post office. In those days, it was just plain dirt roads, maintained by team and fresno and a grader.

My sister Grace and two brothers, Maurice and Allan, were all born at home at Dimsdale. There were no hospitals close in those days, just a midwife, Mrs. Anna Johnston, better known as Grandma Johnston. The doctor always made house calls and travelled by horse and team with buggy or cutter.

My dad used to farm in the summer. During the winter he used to saw wood and chop grain for the neighbours. Nelson Card would stay with us and do the chores night and morning and go to school during the day.

We kids all started school at the Wapiti School. It was just a one room school and one teacher taught all the grades from one to eight, and sometimes a grade nine student or so. Ralph, Grace and myself did go to Hermit Lake School for a short time, because it was a little closer than Wapiti School. It was a long way to go, be it either school. When we moved to Dimsdale we had only one and a half miles to go so that wasn't so bad.

My dad farmed at Dimsdale until the time of his death, March 20, 1929. He met a tragic death in a buzz saw accident. He was sawing wood at home.

Graft and Bill McLevin were helping, also Ernie Cowell and his son Lawrence. If I'm not mistaken, Graft and Ernie remained at the scene. Dr. Little was phoned and came out from Grande Prairie, but took a long time. My dad had passed away by the time the doctor had arrived. He suffered very severe head injuries. He was buried in the Grande Prairie cemetery.

That left my mother with five small children to raise, ranging in age from two to eleven years. My uncle Joe came up for Dad's funeral. That same spring we had an auction sale. We remained on the farm until a house was built in Dimsdale. We moved there in August of 1929. My mother got a family allowance (or was it called mother's allowance) cheque for $60 per month and as each child reached the age of 15 years, the cheque was $15 less.

When we were all just kids, we used to go skating on the dam and lake that joined it. We used to skate after school, and on Sundays everybody would turn out, young and old alike. Often someone would put their car on the lake, and anyone who wished would skate behind on a rope or such and jump the muskrat houses and just have a lot of fun.



Ralph, Edie, Grace, Maurice and Allan Van Sickle taken at Dimsdale about 1930.

Grampa Johnston used to sharpen our skates regularly. We bought the file which only cost around 25¢ those days. Grandma Johnston did some sewing for Grace and me — only cost a dollar or sometimes just the thread. Material was only 15¢ or 20¢ a yard then.

I was married on August 6, 1937 to A.C. (Bob) Potter and we moved to Flying Shot. I lived with my in-laws until September, 1944, when we moved to Grande Prairie. We lived there until 1963.

My mother lived in Dimsdale until the spring of 1945 or '46 when she sold the house and went to live with my brother, Maurice, in Rimbey. She remained there until her death in February, 1965 at the age of 81.

I left Grande Prairie in 1963 (after my marriage broke up), and it has changed and grown a lot since then.

Ralph joined the army as soon as he was of age. During his time in the army, he got sugar diabetes and gained a lot of weight. He was in the hospital for some time and had to take his discharge.

Maurice and Allan also joined the army as soon as they were of age. They both served overseas. In France, Maurice was wounded in the leg, and was flown back to England where he was in the hospital for a year or more. From there he was returned to Edmonton where he spent another year in the hospital and had many operations on his leg, but the knee finally went stiff. He is still living in Rimbey on the quarter section that was once owned by my grandparents.

Allan put in 30 or more years in service, then decided to take his discharge and settle down. He now lives in Richmond, B.C.

Grace was also in the army and as much as she wanted to go overseas, her health would not permit her, so she only served in Canada. She was married while in the service in Calgary.



Mrs. R. Van Sickle with son Maurice.

Allan was married in Edmonton, after he joined the army. A couple of years later, he and his wife had twins, Delores and Dennis.

I divorced and then remarried in August, 1970, and became a widow in January, 1974.

The Hunter Watson Story

Hunter Watson homesteaded the SE 4-71-7-W6 which he proved up and eventually sold to Mr. E.D. Brown. He served on the Wapiti School board from 1912 to January 15, 1914. Along with Lola May Watson and Mr. Stonewall Watson, Hunter ran a horse ranch on the SE 4, S½ 3, S½ 2, and the SW 1-71-7-W6 and NE 33 and all of 34-70-7-W6.

The George Wisdom Story

George Goodwill Wisdom was born in Middlesex, England, where he became a goldsmith. As a young man, he heard tales of Grande Prairie City and the homestead land just for the taking. On coming to Canada he worked for farmers in Saskatchewan for a while before coming to the Peace River area. He was amazed to find Grande Prairie comprised of only a few shacks instead of big buildings, lights and streets he had heard so much about. He filed on NE 22-71-7-W6 on January 28, 1913, when he was 36 years of age. There on Richmond Hill, he built a log cabin and a large frame barn which remained a landmark for many years. The view of the mountains and surrounding territory was beautiful. It was very windy though, and it is said that the roof of his cabin lifted off one day, but fortunately landed back down the right way, with only a calendar and a frying pan sticking out.

George used to tell about walking in to this country from Grouard. Being very hungry he would eat rabbits and bark off trees. During the winter months he used to go from place to place sawing wood with his engine and saw. Those days were always fun as all the neighbors would go from place to place and help put the logs through the machine, much like threshing time. George would eat and stay overnight wherever he was working.

He also used to haul water from the lake in a big tank on a wagon. One Halloween some pranksters thought it fun to exchange the large rear wheels with the smaller front ones on the heavy water wagon. It took George many hours of jacking and prying to get them back in proper position.

His later years were spent on the farm with his horses, where he passed away in the late 1940's.



George Wisdom in 1946.

General Photos



Hank Stokke's 490 Chev Automobile with Frank and John Stoll on running board, Emily Stephenson standing on running board, Wes, Edna and Carrie Stephenson in front seat, Evelyn Thompson and Ruth Dillon centre, Mona Stephenson and Art Anderson at rear, 1924.



Grandma Edith Anderson - 1928.



Spring Lake - looking from Frank Johnston's homestead across to Ed and Rena Van Horne's homestead.



A.U.F. Woman's meeting.
Left to right; back row: Pauline Anderson, Mrs. Linton, Mrs. Dillon, Mrs. Talbot, Mrs. Dahlman, Mrs. Johnston, Mrs. Card and Mrs. Ralph Johnston.
Front row: Mrs. Jebb, Violet Patterson, Mrs. Rasperson, Miss Tolly (demonstrator), Mrs. George Stephen, E.D. Brown, Mrs Luckey and children Clarence, Ken Johnston, and Mary Stephen.



Elevators at Dimsdale.



Dimsdale Community Sunday School.



Ray Dillon hauling fence posts - 1911.



Ladies at Mrs. Brown's house for U.F.W.A. meeting.
Left to right; back row: Mrs. Bob Anderson, Mrs. Eddie Brown, Mrs. Hawkes (with Clinton), Mrs. Stokke, ? ?, Mrs. Ted Lewis, Mrs. Van Schaick, Iola Stephen and Mrs. Linden.
Front row: Mrs. McIntosh (with children), Nettie Stephen, and Freda Jebb.



Gathering in the Dimsdale Hall October 1968, honoring Mr. Graf McLevin, Mr. Walter Konevecki and Mr. and Mrs. Leslie.

Chapter 5: Flying Shot



Flying Shot Lake Settlement

The W.G. McFarlane survey report of June 1909 to the Surveyor General, Ottawa confirmed these findings emphasizing the excellent farm land and the abundance of geese and ducks in area.

Flying Shot or Ka-nawaata-hiket, as the Indians called it was one of the earliest areas surveyed.

There were really two lakes, though the one farther west has very little water today compared to what it had years ago. During hunting season the Indians shot ducks from the narrows, hence the name Flying Shot. Surveyed in 1907 by St. Cyr, the area fronting the lake was divided into lots ranging from 10 to 178 acres for treaty grants for the Indians. Most of the Indians moved here from Lac St. Anne. Quoting from the report of J.B. Sy. Cyr, Dominion Land Survey, August 2, 1907 to the Surveyor General at Ottawa:

"The survey of that Settlement commenced on the 2nd of August, 1907 and was completed the 20th of the same month. The surface is bluff and prairie and the soil is composed of a deep black loam resting on a sandy clay subsoil. About three quarters of the surface covered by the settlement is thickly timbered with poplar and thick large willow with a few spruce trees here and there. A small quantity of hay is cut around Flying Shot Lake. Potatoes are raised successfully every year in the settlement, and this summer small fields of oats were looking very nice."

"Flying Shot Lake is very shallow and it's water is not very good. Wood for fuel is plentiful in this settlement. There is no water power and no mineral of any description has been found there."

The report continues with mention of early frosts which were unusual - the falls generally being long and fine. The supply of water was reported as permanent and more than sufficient for the needs of the Settlement.

"The people of the Flying Shot Lake Settlement communicate with Saskatoon Lake, Bear Creek and Spirit



Early Settlers.



Sports Day Spectators.

River by two fairly good wagon roads in the prairie country but through the timber between Spirit River and Grande Prairie, the road is in bad condition. The freighters have to take small loads in order to be able to reach Grande Prairie without breaking their wagons. These will improve with the time for I was told in the fall that the Government had men opening a new road on a better location."

The Indians have long since moved from the area, but certainly have played their part in the development of this beautiful country. The lots, where they dwelt, were surveyed to give them access to the lake and consequently were irregular in size. Many of the oldtimers today recall the pride the Indians took in their cabins and land. During the elections of 1913 a news item reported a meeting was held at Baptiste Bisson's house at Flying Shot. Adam Callihou chaired the meeting with some 60 dark and white skinned residents jamming the small house. Leo Ferguson spoke in Cree on behalf of Mr. Patterson, Conservative candidate. Mr. Celestin Gladu dwelt upon the equal value of a half-breed's vote with that of a white man.



Believed to be Mr. and Mrs. Adam Calliou.

The natives seemed so intent to leave the Flying Shot Settlement they almost gave their grants away. One of the ones that lived here at one time told of a few she could remember.



Believed to be the Gautier Family.

Mr. Clifford got his for $100 worth of groceries and $10 to cover the transfer. Mr. Owens for $100, Mr. Salmond for 10 pounds of sugar, 50 pounds of flour, one pound of tea, one plug of tobacco and one pair of overalls. One native traded his for a team of horses and a wagon and then the horses died before he got very far.

Some of the original owners were:

Lot 4 - Baptiste Bethume
Lot 5 - Pete Calliou
Lot 8 - Adam Gladu
Lot 9 - William Calliou
Lot 10 - Alfred and St. Pierre Gladu
Lot 11 - Francis Ambleau
Lot 12 - Essier Calliou
Lot 13 - St. Pierre and Louis Gautier
Lot 15 - Celeste Gladu
Lot 16 - Johnny Gladu
Lot 17 - Pierre Belcourt
Lot 18 - Ben Gladu

One of the last to leave was Louis Gautier about 1925, thus closing a colorful chapter of history.

The Harry B. Clifford Family

Information and quotes from "Pioneers of the Peace" and Grande Prairie Capitol of the Peace by Isabel M. Campbell

"Early in the spring of 1906, the first white woman within 60 miles resolutely set about to add her homemaker's touch to a new log house near the west shore of Flying Shot Lake. One of her first efforts was to make and hang curtains at the small windows for privacy against the curious eyes of the occasional trapper, and her Indian neighbors. Born Maud Pamela Westcott, daughter of one of Dresden, Ontario's first settlers, she had been teaching several years before becoming Mrs. H.B. Clifford. Her husband Harry, born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, was working in Ontario with the oil industry when they met."

"In 1905 Mr. Clifford, an engineer with the Ontario oil industry, made his first trip to Grande Prairie (district) by canoe and pack train to search out the oil potential in the Peace River country. He liked what he saw and determined to return. He and his wife reached Edmonton January 19, 1906 and a week later, headed northwest driving two teams. Although Mr. Clifford believed in the great potential of the country, not only for its oil, but for its agriculture possibilities, he took precautions to supplement his income by trading, until his land could be brought into production. Accordingly the couple loaded up 12 tons of trade goods for the trek. It took 31 brittle, white winter days to travel the ice-bound lakes and rivers and break deep snow trails overland to reach Flying Shot Lake, where they settled down to create their home." It is said the lot was purchased from Pierre Belcourt for $100 worth of groceries and $10 for the transfer.

Far from home and family, the mails were eagerly awaited.

In her memoirs Mrs. Clifford recalled:

"Our nearest post office was Spirit River. Many a time the Grande Prairie mail came tied in a bandana handkerchief in the care of a Halfbreed who was passing through."

Though no school was established, Mrs. Clifford is credited with carrying on as "Teacher" among the Crees,

Beaver, Metis and growing numbers of white children beginning to settle on la Grande Prairie. In December 1907, Hilda Clifford became the first white child born on the prairie. The nearest doctor was 250 miles away at Lesser Slave Lake. A nurse from Toronto, sent out to Spirit River had agreed to care for Mrs. Clifford during her confinement. However, an Indian midwife was with her when Mrs. Johnson arrived the day after the baby was born.

In the summer of 1909 Reverend and Mrs. Forbes arrived in the area on their scouting expedition to see if it was a suitable time to start mission work. They made the Clifford place their headquarters.

The W.G. McFarlane survey outfit came that same year and stored their supplies with the Cliffords. During that year several visits were made by Constable Clay of the R.N.W.M.P. then stationed at Sturgeon Lake. In December the post was abandoned, transferred to the Grande Prairie district and established at Clifford's as well.

In the summer of 1910 the Forbes took up residence in one of the Clifford buildings and remained for more than a year until they had located their homestead and erected buildings. In the winter their home became a hospital. When the Forbes moved to their new home, the house they had occupied was used as the first court house in Grande Prairie. This building also served later as the Flying Shot Lake school with Miss Jeanette McPhee, teacher.

In 1916 Mr. Clifford was forced to close out the trading post because of failing health and Mrs. Clifford went back to teaching. Since there was no school district at Flying Shot Lake they moved to the Wapiti School District No. 2802. Two rooms of "Lacombe" Johnston's house were turned over to the Clifford family which now included, beside Hilda, Eleanor and Harry. Sixteen pupils greeted Mrs. Clifford, who taught that term and in 1918 joined the staff of the Grande Prairie School as Primary teacher, continuing there for the next eight years, teaching music as well.

During those years in Grande Prairie Mrs. Clifford was a member of the first Community Choir and played the lead in the first Cantata ever presented, singing the role of Zeresh in "Esther".



Smart's house being moved from the Clifford place, 1928.

After years of invalidism, Mr. Clifford died in 1925.

Mrs. Clifford remained in Grande Prairie until 1927 then left for Vancouver, where she taught for a short time before returning to teach at Coleman, Alberta. In 1935 she was presented with a silver Jubilee Medal and continued to teach Primary school until her retirement at Victoria, B.C. in 1943.

The Northern Tribune of May 15, 1947 closed the chapter on the area's earliest white family history:

"On May 8 in Victoria, B.C. Mrs. Maud Westcott Clifford passed away. To every pioneer resident of the Grande Prairie district the news of her death will be received with profound sadness. Mrs. Clifford not only was the first pioneer white woman in the district, she was also the best loved...."

Reverend and Mrs. Alexander Forbes at Flying Shot

In 1909 Reverend Alexander Forbes and his wife, Agnes, made a speculative trip into the Peace River country to determine the feasibility of starting a mission charge in the area. They made their headquarters at the H.B. Clifford home on Flying Shot Lake. Convinced that sufficient settlement already warranted their endeavors, they returned the following year prepared to stay.

From the time they left Fort Saskatchewan until they had their first meal on the Prairie at Flying Shot Lake was 73 days.

Reverend Forbes performed one of his first duties with the wedding of Elsie Bowles and Frank Craiger. Miss Bowles was a step-daughter of Ed Anderson, one of the first settlers at Twin Lakes (Clairmont).

Mrs. Forbes, who had received nurses' training in Scotland, immediately began treating the sick. Miss Baird, a nurse, sent out by the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church of Edmonton, made her home with the Forbes, joining in the work of nursing the sick. In the winter their home became a hospital, having as patients Mr. Byrne (afterward Government telegraph operator at Grande Prairie until his death) who had been severely burned and also frostbitten after his house had been burned on an extremely cold night, Christmas Eve. Between Christmas and New Year a second patient arrived with a broken leg. Miss Baird set the limb as best she could. A third patient, Ross Beatty, came along afflicted with measles so the caboose used by the Forbes on their trip into the country became the isolation ward of the hospital. Isaac Nelson was also a member of the household, and Mrs. Forbes had also volunteered to care for Buster Baxter, whose father had gone to the bush to cut logs for his buildings.

"That summer there were no fewer than 35 cases of sickness treated ranging from the simplest to some of the most difficult," Dr. Forbes wrote in his reminiscences of 1917. "Nor was the little log shack at Flying Shot Lake merely a consulting room and primitive hospital. But wherever there was need, Mrs. Forbes, that indefatigable spirit, visited the teepees of the natives and saved many a child's life and in one or two cases, that of the mother."

In 1909 the Government granted ten acres for church purposes adjacent to the Argonaut Company's proposed townsite on Bear Creek. This was later exchanged for six lots and a quantity of lumber.

"As settlers came in the next spring (1911) we found it necessary to move over to land that we had secured from the Government (SW 25-71-6-W6 filed May 26, 1910) which was the centre of a growing settlement and near the main Trail, four miles distant from Flying Shot."

The work was carried on in Grande Prairie for many years after the move.

It was not only the first Protestant church established in Grande Prairie, but the first hospital, also, (indeed the second hospital in the Province of Alberta under the

auspices of the Presbyterian Church) that owed so much to the dedication of this missionary couple.

Mrs. Forbes died in August 1917 and by May 1925 Reverend Forbes left Grande Prairie to continue pastoral work in Ontario. He died August 7, 1937.

Flying Shot School, 1918

by Jessie Erskine Renne

Mr. Clifford donated an acre of land on the southwest shoreline of Flying Shot Lake for a schoolhouse site. This first school was a log granary building on skids with two small windows on the lake side and rough wide plank flooring. Five white children and nineteen Indian children made up the enrollment. The Indian family names were Gautier, Le Tendre, Gladue, Belcourt and Gray. The whites were the Watts, Larsons, Chapman and Erskine. The teacher was Miss McPhee.



First Flying Shot School.

Mr. Clifford had spacious flower beds around his two-story log house and his family, Mrs. Clifford and three children - Hilda, Eleanor and Harry, I think lived in Prairie City, as we called Grande Prairie then, so the children could go to school there.

I remember how the grass around the area was dotted with luscious wild strawberries and how the wind rocked the small poplar grove of young trees where our granary school on skids was set. The wild ducks and geese on the lake were a raucaus competition for the teacher's soft voice inside that interesting room of children.

At noon, our lunch-time performance must have been a cultural shock to Miss McPhee, who provided each desk with nice little oilcloth 12 x 12 inch covers so we could open our lunches on the desks to eat our sandwiches politely and properly from an oilcloth cover.

Other days and through the short summer time, this little school was kept open, and we often raided rhubarb stalks from Mr. Jack Owens' good patch for a dessert to our noon lunch.

Pearl and Fred Larson and I, Jessie Erskine, travelled the four or five miles to school in a road cart - the racing kind, drawn by a Roman nosed buckskin and the others, many of them, came on bareback ponies. This cavalry of school horses had their own society, tied or hobbled out under the poplar trees, attracting great hoardes of deer flies and bull-frog flies as they cropped grass and strawberries waiting for four o'clock. School opened at nine and ran until four with one hour off for noon, back in Flying Shot School, in 1918.

Later a Government approved frame schoolhouse was erected one and one half miles west of the early granary school on skids, and our enrollment grew to 30 pupils. This was in 1920 and Tissingtons, Hugels, Fletchers, and Cards joined our Flying Shot School District as early settlers and homesteaders. Now we had a school barn, so the horses could be inside from the snows that blew in the first hard winter.

Ervin Willis was the teacher of Flying Shot in 1924 and he planned a fine Christmas concert for this little pioneer school, drills and dialogues, recitations and songs, all so much relished by parents and students alike. At the height of the festivities, about ten o'clock at night, a wild strange glow of blazing light suddenly appeared on our schoolhouse windows and the cry of Fire! Fire! went up in the middle of the Nativity tableau. It was the teacherage where Mr. Willis lived, going up in flames, (as if by magic) and the high tongues of fire were punctuated by shot-gun pellets exploding, so the sound of gun-fire accompanied the blaze thro' the snow. All this was seen and heard through the Flying Shot schoolhouse windows - a couple of blocks distant. When the catastrophe was decided to be a total loss of Mr. Willis' belongings, and the structure that housed him - he manfully strode back to the school with the entire concert-crowd of parents and the Christmas program continued - even to the lunch of sandwiches and cake and hot coffee from a wash boiler that always concluded such times when the pioneer people came to gather at their schoolhouse.

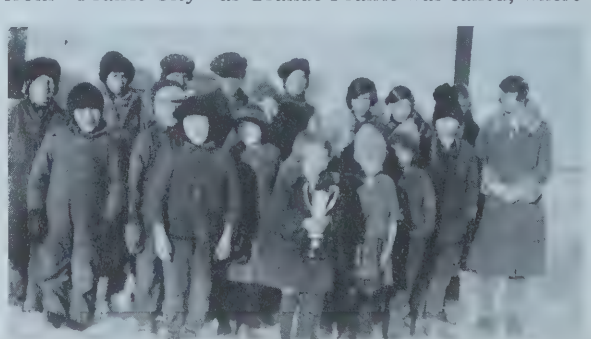
Miss Marian Morrison was one teacher during the 1920's. Grades one through eight were held and the enrollment climbed as the district filled with settlers, many of them were returned men following World War I armistice.

I wish I could return for one day to the lovely park-like scene that was Flying Shot district 60 years ago. Myriads of wild ducks and geese swooped down to the lake from the luscious banks of green, sloping down to the fresh water. And the clear glad calls of the first school room of pioneer children matched the population of lake fowl in exuberance and joy, 1918.

The School in Flying Shot

by Helen Tissington

During the beginning of the twentieth century as northern Alberta was gradually being settled, the first concerns of the early settlers seems to have been for a school and a church. In Flying Shot the first school was a low log building on the Clifford place, which unfortunately has disappeared for it was quite an historic building. Rev and Mrs. Forbes made it their first home and hospital when they arrived in 1910. When they left it became the first court house in Grande Prairie, and finally the first school in 1917. A Miss MacDonald was the first teacher, coming from "Prairie City" as Grande Prairie was called, where



Flying Shot School 1928 with teacher, Ruth Grimmett. Trophy won at the School Fair.

she had come to visit her uncle, Malcolm Campbell. The next teacher was Miss Jeanette McPhee whose father was one of Grande Prairie's first lawyers.

In 1920 a proper school building was built west of the old site on Dan Owen's land. The first teacher in the new school was Miss Marian Morrison. The pupils were a mixture of white and native children, for Flying Shot was originally an Indian settlement. In summer time there were many Indian children in the school, but when winter came they were gone as their parents moved from place to place. Often, too, the school was closed during the coldest part of the winter, staying open during the summer.



Back: Betty Smart, Helen Bain, Mary Whitford, Mary Luchak, Elsie Hugel, Merle Eisenman, Edith Tissington.
Front: Mary Cameron, Barbara Smart, Maizie Sinclair, Violet Luchak, Mary Ross, 1930's.

As more people settled the area the school became crowded and children from the borders of the district had up to four miles to go to school. So it was decided in 1948 to form a new school district west and south of the Flying Shot School District to accomodate these children. The new school district was known as "Lucky Tree" -- named after the two largest families in the new district -- the Luckeys and the Greentrees. Then the Flying Shot School was no longer in the centre of the district, so it was moved east again onto land donated by Mr. Howes, not far from where the little old log school had stood in the beginning.



Gregory Stemplowski, Leda Howenko, Claire Tissington, Annie Stemplowski, Jack Blom, Don Partlow, Dwayne Rimbey, Joan Stewart, Barbara Cameron, Vera Howenko, Sidney Stubbs, Hubert Tissington, Roger Rimbey, Tom Finch, Don Stewart, Neil Tissington, Bob Howenko, Ken Eskdale, Martha Blom, Linda Popowich, Ethel Blom. June 1951.

Mrs. Pam Tissington (nee Hunter) was the first teacher in the school after the move, followed by Mrs. Rimbey and then by Mrs. Helen Tissington who was the last teacher in the Flying Shot school. Helen Tissington, then Helen Foy, and her father Elsworth Foy had taught previously at the old location. Mr. Foy came to Flying Shot in 1930, teaching until December 1932 when he died of heart failure one cold winter night on his way home from town. His daughter took over the school in January 1933 and taught until her marriage to Gerard Tissington in 1936. Due to a shortage of teachers following the second Great War she resumed teaching in 1952 until the school was closed in 1956 when the county built Harry Balfour school in Grande Prairie, taking in seven rural schools around the town, of which Flying Shot was one.

With the passing of the rural school much of the community spirit of these rural school districts went with it. The school picnics and Christmas concerts were sadly missed by young and old alike. No doubt a higher standard of education can result from these larger schools with their many teachers, but it was surprising what a good teacher in a one-room school could accomplish. Many outstanding men and women began their school careers in these schools, and many renowned educators began their teaching careers in just such schools as these.



Back: Sid Tissington, Jack Blom, Danny Sinclair, Jim Aylesworth, Peter Howes, Gregory Stemplowski, and Gordon Sinclair.
Second: Helen Zahn, Claire Tissington, Muriel Stewart, Dorothy Cameron, Mae Blom, Annie Stemplowski, Barbara Howes.
Front: Hubert Tissington, Erna Fehr, Mary Stemplowski, Ruth Howes, Neil Blom (behind), Barbara Cameron, Janet Tissington, and Sidney Stubbs in front of Luckey Tree School.

The Church In Flying Shot

by Helen Tissington

According to Mrs. Clifford's memoirs in "Pioneers of the Peace", the first Protestant church service in the Grande Prairie area was held in her home in November 1907 by Rev. Murdoch Johnson from Spirit River. As church services were rare, everyone attended regardless of denominational affiliation. The Roman Catholics, however, had their own mission church on the west side of Bear Creek opposite Grande Prairie.

In 1911 and 1913 two Church of England clergymen came to the Grande Prairie area who were to have a lasting effect on their church in the surrounding districts, including Flying Shot. With the help of Mr. William Sharpe, a carpenter, they built several churches in the area which they thought would best serve the residents. But as time went on and the population shifted, some of them no longer had any Church of England people near them. One such church was St. Bartholomew's at Hermit Lake.



After Church Service at Flying Shot School. Back L. to R.. Reverend Armstrong, Mrs. and Mr. Waterman, Mrs. and Mr. Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Hugel, Mrs. Card, daughter Francis, Iola Stephen (Mrs. Dick Greentree), Marie Hugel, Mrs. Hodges, Peggy (Mrs. Mair), Mrs. Henderson (Mrs. Waterman's mother), Hilda Card, Elsie Hugel (Jebb).

In Flying Shot, both the Presbyterians and the Anglicans began conducting services in the new school which was opened in 1920. They took alternate Sundays and a good many of the Protestants attended both services. It was a meeting place where one could see one's neighbors. A Reverend Wright was one of the first Presbyterian ministers, while Mr. and Mrs. Little ministered to the Anglicans. Mrs. Little, who was a school teacher, at one time substituted in the school for the current teacher, a Mr. Willis who was away in Grande Prairie taking some exams. Mrs. Wright began a Women's Missionary society for the ladies of the district, which proved to be a very popular group, meeting monthly in the homes of its members. Everyone was welcome to attend if she did not mind her efforts going towards the furthering of the Presbyterian faith. Mrs. Jim Tissington was the president of the Women's Missionary Society for many years.



Dedication Service at the Anglican Church at Flying Shot November, 1929 by Bishop Robins. This church was moved to Flying Shot from Hermit Lake.

In 1929 due to the fact that St. Bartholomew's Church at Hermit Lake was closed because of lack of attendance, it was decided to move it to Flying Shot so the district would at last have its own church building. Soon after, the Anglicans and Presbyterians began using it on alternate Sundays. It was officially opened in November 1929 by Bishop Robins with a large congregation in attendance. Many of the local children, now men and women, were baptized in that little church, and Betty and Barbara Smart were confirmed there. A local boy, Alan Howes, who attended there regularly with his family, later entered the ministry. The whole district turned out to celebrate his ordination when a gathering was arranged in the local hall, with Bishop Sovereign in attendance. He had ordained Alan earlier in the day in Grande Prairie.

Throughout the years Mrs. Jim Tissington had a Sunday School for the Presbyterian children, while for some years Mrs. Howes and Mrs. G.H. Tissington had one for the Anglican children. The Anglican van ladies also conducted a Sunday School by Post, supplying lessons and Sunday School papers to children wishing to have them. They also visited in the homes during the summer months. Many times the local residents had to help these ladies get their heavy vans out of the mud, our roads in those days being a far cry from those of today.



Flying Shot Sunday School Class with Mr. Aylesworth and Mrs. Tissington.

Gradually as the roads improved and more people had cars, most of the church going people began following the example of the Roman Catholics who attended more centralized churches in Grande Prairie. So the little church along with the local school became a thing of the past. I often think more of us attended church in those days when a real effort was needed to get everyone into his or her best bib and tucker and into church. We are probably missing a lot by moving out of our pioneer past into the modern world of today.



Flying Shot W.M.S. and Dimsdale Ladies: L. to R.: Mrs. Hugel, Mrs. Howes, Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Leslie, Mrs. Fredricksen, Mrs. Lewis, Mrs. Mary Finch, Mrs. Dunbar, Mary McKeeman, Mrs. Cameron, Mrs. Floyd Van Schaick, Mrs. Bob Cameron, Mrs. Walters, Mrs. Bradley, Mrs. Crane-Williams, Mrs. Tissington, Blanche Smith, Mr. Fisher.

James Aylesworth

James Aylesworth came from Davidson, Saskatchewan. He came to Grande Prairie after serving in W.W.1. He settled on land in the Flying Shot area through the Soldier's Settlement Board in 1921. Later he took a homestead across the road, land now owned by Fred Steinke.

His life revolved around young folk, as he was always taking friends and neighbor's children camping and to ball games. He liked to grow a big vegetable garden to sell door to door in town, and often picked wild berries for sale. He was fond of his horses and dogs and treated all his animals like family.

He liked to knit and could often be seen at ball games cheering on his favorite team all the while knitting on a pair of socks or mittens for some of his young friends.

One Christmas it is remembered, that he knit and hung 500 pair of mittens on the tree at the Flying Shot school for the children of the district. The surplus he gave to the Salvation Army.



Jim Aylesworth in Rigler's house at his last Christmas.

Later he moved into Grande Prairie to stay with long time friends, the Riglers. He was living in Pioneer Lodge when he passed away.

The Billy Bean Family

Lois Tissington married Bill Bean on October 22, 1930. They had five children, Wally, Ray, Gary, Ruth and Ken. The children grew up and went to school first at Flying Shot, then Percy and on to the Grande Prairie Montrose and Grande Prairie High schools.

Wally married Nina Coone on September 16, 1955. They live in the Flying Shot district. They have five children, Brenda, Lois, Kevin, Lorna and Rodney. Lois is married to Don Goldade.

In 1952, Ray married Joan Elliott, and they had two children, Darlene and Dale. Ray passed away on November 1, 1959. Joan in remarried and lives in Calgary.

Gary married Laverne Walker on June 19, 1968. They have one little girl, Rebecca. They live in the Dimsdale area.

Ruth married Dick Reynolds on June 19, 1967. Theyhave two boys, Brent and Shawn and live at Rocky Mountain House.



Raymond, Garry, Wallace, Kenneth and Ruth Bean.

Ken married Emilie Boisvert in November of 1968. They have two children, Jennifer Jaye and Christen Micheal, and they live at Spruce Wood in the Flying Shot district.

Lois Tissington Bean passed away on April 19, 1955, and Bill passed away on February 9, 1975.

The Gordon Blackmore Family

by Gordon Blackmore

Our first residence in the Peace Country - Grande Prairie area was a farm granary made livable by the addition of some windows and curtains, plus a cook stove and orange crate cupboards. It was a little better than some people had in World War II days when some married servicemen settled for shanties built with one ply of boards and two ply of cracks. Our shanty was located close by the R.C.A.F. station which is now the Grande Prairie airport and this was how we came to be here since I was stationed there as Wireless Electrical Mechanic in the R.C.A.F.

In the summer of 1945 I was discharged to return to the profession of school teacher at the Flying Shot School for the following school year.

Our housing situation improved immensely in the teacherage, provided at very low rent, paid out of the handsome salary of $100 per month. The teacherage came partly furnished with furniture and thoroughly furnished with mice from the nearby fields. It was a bad mouse year. Farm people will know what I mean by a bad mouse year. Our half-grown cat simply couldn't cope, and all fall I had to make several trips nightly to the pantry, driving the mice through the kitchen into the pantry where they always seemed to hide behind a big homemade plank ironing board which leaned against the wall. This formed what must have looked like the perfect shelter to a mouse, but was really the perfect mouse exterminator, for a sharp push with the foot against the ironing board would enable me to gather them up by the tails and toss them out the door.

Well, it was a good school as seen from this rural teacher's point of view. The good refers to the students and community. They were the most co-operative, eager sportsman-like groups of young people I have ever come across in any school. They raised the money for new bats, balls, back stop wire, boxing gloves, swing ropes and then constructed or renewed their sports facilities themselves.



Milton and the cat that couldn't keep up to the mice at Blackmores.

Probably our best achievement was the time we just missed first place in fast ball (then called softball) at the Grande Prairie and County sports day, and that against town teams from the region. I must treasure the memories of games and sports in which I participated and was accepted as one of a group of 34 or so who attended the school. The pillow fight bar and the chinning bars were in constant use when classes were out. Perhaps some of the students remember the contest of whirling head over heels around the chinning pipe that one of the older boys won at something like 240 times around without touching ground. No major accidents or losses marred the school year although one young lad learned about Horned Owls the hard way. He tried to carry a wounded one by the wings, only to have one set of talons clamp to his knee and the other set go into his wrist. The opposing talons, I am sure, were long enough that they more than met there. They were sturdy little boys in those days; he didn't even cry.

The school year ended, and Lois and I and our family of two boys, Milton and the new addition, Danny, left for central Alberta to other teaching positions. This was followed by employment at coal mines, firing for the C.P.R., sawmill work and then in 1952 employment with the Alberta Forest Service as Forest Officer, commonly called Fire Ranger, at Rocky Mountain House and Nordegg areas.

This employment brought us back to the Peace country to live in Woking and Hythe where our last two boys, Ryan and David, were born.

Our return to the Flying Shot Country was the result of a transfer in 1959 from the Forest Service to Alberta Municipal Affairs with headquarters at Grande Prairie and it presented us with the opportunity to obtain a V.L.A. small holding and build our home here. We were happy to return. Here we have put down our roots, added Wanda to our family, educated our boys, seen them married, and raising our grandchildren.

At this point in time, all our boys are married. Milton and Fay (Pollo) have two sons, Christopher and Derrick, and live here in Flying Shot. Dan and Marilyn (McKinnon) live in Edmonton, Ryan and Heide (Holst) live in Grande Prairie, and David and Gladys (Poole) live in Slave Lake with their children Stacey, Nathan and this spring's addition, Corey.

I now can say Flying Shot district has been a good place to live and now retire in.

It is a place of many memories such as the local ball game umpire who loved to knit. He didn't stop for the game either and his, "You're out or strike three", never seemed to get mixed with his knit three, pearl two; they both went on together. Who will forget the long cold ride to town for groceries on top of a sled load of wood or maybe the crash site of the World War II fighter plane in the district? These and many other memories are what a community is made of.

The Kees Blom Family

by Jack Blom

Tom Melvin Chapman was born in Anherst, Nova Scotia, in 1878. Flora Mae Chapman (McFarlane) was born in Port Elgin, New Brunswick. The Chapmans left Amherst in the spring of 1912 travelling by train to Edson, Alberta. It was there my mother (Hilda Chapman) was born in June of 1912, Tom and Flora's only child. Tom worked for the railroad in Edson from 1912 to 1916. The Chapmans came over the Edson Trail to homestead in the Flying Shot area in June of 1916. The first land filed on was where Pete Stemplowski now lives. In 1928 Chapman sold this land to Kornelis Blom and bought where Gordon Fried now lives. It was at this point in time that Hilda Chapman became acquainted with Kornelis Blom. In 1930 Tom Chapman again sold out and this time to Adam Zahn and moved to the Hinton Trail Area where he farmed until Mrs. Chapman died in 1938. Tom sold out and moved back to Flying Shot to live with his daughter. He stayed only a short time and retired to Wembley until his death in August 1950.



Tom Chapman and Bob Cameron.

My Dad, Kornelis (Kees) Blom was born in Gronigen, Holland in February 1906, the son of Elsga and Jacoba Blom. Dad studied to be a doctor but gave up after four years and came to Canada. He arrived in Montreal in April of 1927. He travelled west and his first job was on a farm near Vermilion, Alberta. He then came to the Flying Shot area in July of the same year and worked on the farm of J.B. Oliver.



Kees and Hilda Blom Wedding—Dec. 12, 1929.

In 1928 he bought his first land from my grandfather, Tom Chapman. It was then he started courting Hilda Chapman. On December 12, 1929, they were married in the Anglican Church in Grande Prairie. They made their home on Lot 12 where Dunkley's Feed Lot is now. This was home for 24 years.

Dad farmed until his back operation in 1942. He suffered for years with a back problem. He often slept on the floor as this was the only place he could get any relief. Dr. Carlyle tried many different treatments, none of which were successful. In 1942 Dr. Carlyle sent Dad to Edmonton for further help. In Edmonton the Doctors found that Dad had a broken disc in his back. He was operated on by a Dr. Hepburn and the disc removed. After a long stay in the hospital Dad came home by C.P. Air, his first airplane ride. The operation and long stay in the hospital left Dad very weak and hardly able to walk. For nearly a year he had to learn to walk all over again, first on two canes, then with one, until he could walk on his own. He never fully recovered from this operation and always had problems walking.

Dad then went to work for the Department of Transport and as surveyor worked at Grande Prairie, Fort St. John and Eldorada. In 1947 Dad went to work for Hystad Brothers until they sold out. He then worked for Clarence Johnson in Valemount until his retirement in 1968 when Dad and Mother moved to Summerland, B.C.

Mother being an only child she made up for it in her own family by raising 11 children (eight boys and three girls). Dirk, Esser, Jack, Mae, Neil, Ethel, Martha, Tom, Ken and Keith (twins) and Bob. We are now all married and live in different parts of Alberta and British Columbia, and two live in the United States.



The Blom Family:
Back row - L. to R.: Dick, Esser, Jack, Mae Kirkpatrick, Neil, Ethel Hogg.
Front row - L. to R.: Martha Symons, Tom, Ken, Keith and Bob.

Dirk has two adopted children and lives in Los Angeles, California.

Esser has three boys and lives in Valemount, B.C.

Jack has no children and lives in Grande Prairie.

Mae (Kirkpatrick) has four children and lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

Neil has no children and lives in Seattle, Washington.

Ethel (Hogg) has three children and lives on a farm near Wembley, Alberta.

Martha (Symons) has two children and lives in Prince George, B.C.

Tom has one boy and lives in Canal Flats, B.C.

Ken has two boys and lives in Nakusp, B.C.

Keith has two boys and lives in Blue River, B.C.

Bob has no children and lives in Prince George, B.C.

Mother died in Grande Prairie on October 18, 1970, from a heart attack while visiting friends in the area.

Dad has suffered a stroke and is now in a nursing home in Prince George, B.C.

Mr. Kornelis Blom passed away February 12, 1980.

The Alex Cameron Family

Alexander Cameron was born (1887) in Huntley, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He was one of the elder of a family of 15, of which he often said; "Each boy had seven brothers and seven sisters."

In 1909 he arrived in the United States after a long ocean voyage on the ship "Old California", which was later sunk in W.W.1. Two brothers, Bob and Ed, and a sister, Aggie, arrived in 1912. Alex and his brothers started work at a ranch for Brown and Stewart at Mayfield, Idaho. Aggie went to work in Boise.

They learned from an acquaintance, Harry Ayres, who later homesteaded land now owned by Gordon Sinclair,

of the opportunities in Canada and especially of the Cariboo area. Alex liked the idea so in May 1914 he, Harry Ayres and a cousin, John Allan, left Mayfield. Alex and John stopped in Kellogg to visit relatives and got separated from their travelling companion, Harry Ayres. The two, Alex and John, travelled on and arrived into Lower British Columbia, and helped a farmer put up his hay for the winter. Then Alex left John Allan to look after their horses while he returned to Kellogg to work in the mines.

Next spring he started out again for B.C. Harry Ayres had written to advise him by then to look for land east of the Rockies instead of the Cariboo; the land called the "Peace River Country". Alex and brother Bob left the mines at Kellogg the first days of April 1915, went directly to Spokane, Edmonton and High Prairie via train. Then from High Prairie over the "Snipe Lake Trail", guided by Alex Wishart who was travelling to Grande Prairie. The trail was not without hardship and often a bit of humour mixed in, like the time the dog chased the skunk into the Cameron boys' tent. Needless to say they stayed a few paces away from everyone for some time.

Three months later Alex finally returned to B.C., leaving brother Bob with their friend Harry Ayres. His cousin John Allan who had stayed in B.C. with the animals, had returned to Idaho earlier. By now the livestock had multiplied to seven horses, two cows and two calves. All were loaded onto the train for the trip and during this ride his Holstein-Jersey cow gave birth to a fine calf in a box car in Calgary. All survived despite the pouring rain.

It was Sunday when he arrived to cross the Dunvegan Ferry, which was the only day there was a charge. He gladly paid the thirty-five cents and journeyed on to Spirit River. The total trip took about three weeks.

Finally he arrived in Grande Prairie in the month of July, then went on to Flying Shot Lake and his homestead location, NE 31-70-6-W6, which he had filed on the previous trip.

In 1915 a log cabin was started, the walls and roof were up but the roof leaked so he and Bob moved their tent inside and turned their attention to building barns for the livestock. "I figured I could always build a fire to keep warm but the stock couldn't", was Alex's reasoning. It wasn't until fall that the cabin was finished.

The winter was cold and next one was worse. Alex and brother Bob stacked slough hay for their animals and bought oat bundles from a Lake Saskatoon neighbor to winter them. His close neighbors included a bachelor, Jim Brady, whose land he later bought, and Alex Campbell and wife Dolly to the west.

Alex was married to Margaret Stewart Watson October 5, 1921 in the little McQueen Presbyterian Church by the Reverend Alexander Forbes. Gladys Stephen, nee Brown, and Scotty Taylor were their attendants.

Margaret was only a girl when she came into the Peace River Country with her parents in August, 1916, on the train from the Arrow Lakes in British Columbia. She was born in Moosomin, Saskatchewan.

She attended school in a temporary building near the railway tracks in Grande Prairie. She was living with a sister so she could attend school while her folks took up residence at Flying Shot Lake. In 1918 she attended school at Montrose until November. Then the flu hit the Peace River Country. The weather was fine and thus helped to spread the epidemic.

During that time Alex helped tend to the sick and took care of a number of graves for neighbors who had lost loved ones. It was said that during that time more people died of the flu than in the war.

Alex met Margaret at this time. He had gone to get the doctor from Grande Prairie for the Watson family. Margaret had taken ill and was able to come through the crisis, but lost a sister to the flu. It was a time of bitter sadness and will never be forgotten.

Margaret was always active in the W.M.S. after she was married and is still a hard working member of the Forbes Presbyterian Church. In the early days she often hitched the horse to the buggy and gathered all the neighbor ladies up for the meetings in the home of Mrs. Jane Mitchell.



Mr. and Mrs. Alex Cameron beside their little log house almost covered in hop vines, 1935.

Mary (Finch), their first child was born at home in 1923. Margaret's brother-in-law brought Doctor O'Brien out by team in -45 degrees F January weather. Alex (Jr.) was born seven years later, and two years later, brother Ted.

The community spirit ran high, and neighbors often helped one another with harvest, building bees and berry picking in the summer. The raspberries grew well along the Wapiti banks. Margaret and some of the neighbor ladies were enjoying a berry picking afternoon. As pails became filled they stashed them under some bushes and went on picking. Later when they returned they found a friendly cow licking up the last berry.

School concerts, dances and plays were put on in the school house and everyone pitched in and gave of their time and talent.

The first school was Flying Shot and Alex was on the school board for 25 years. He was also pound keeper, game warden and fire ranger. He took the night watchman's job at Hystad's mill at Dimsdale while Margaret cooked for the camp. Later they both worked at George Stephen's sawmill across the Wapiti River in winter time. Spring would see them back to plant the crop and the garden.

First church services were held in the Flying Shot School with Reverend Wright coming out from Grande Prairie. The Sunday School played a large part in the community. Ball games and tournaments were popular

and the minister at the time, Reverend Davidson, was instrumental in leading the youth of the district.

Alex ran a number of cattle and worked all the land by horse power. He tells of plowing his faithful pocket watch under one day. Margaret spent hours listening up and down the furrow for its ticking, but to no avail.

Threshing crews worked hard each fall to get everyone's crop off and in the bin and to make a straw pile or two for the animals. It gave the young fellows of the district a chance to show off their muscles, too. Gerard Tissington and John Popowich had a crew together each fall and they moved from one neighbor to the next.

Alex Jr. does the farming now. Margaret still enjoys the functions of the district and no bride-to-be ever has a shower without a gift of hand crochet that she has done.

Alex Sr. passed away on February 15, 1980.



Back L. to R.: Curtis, Sherry and Terry Cameron, Jim and Pat, Tom and Jean Finch, Row and Linda McAusland, Ruth and Brenda Finch.
Middle L. to R.: Candace Bond, Sandee and Shelly Cameron, Dianne, Bonnie Finch, Bob Almond, Allan Finch, Rosemarie Finch, Bob Finch, Tina Finch and Bill Finch.
Bottom L. to R.: Jean, Alex, Margaret and Alex Cameron Sr., Mary and Lloyd Finch, Alex Sr. holding Amanda Almond and Lloyd holding Jason Finch.

The Alex Jr. and Ted Cameron Families

Alex was born in the Grande Prairie hospital February 15, 1930. Ted was born in Grande Prairie also, on November 16, 1932. Both attended school at Flying Shot and later high school in Grande Prairie.

As boys their favorite mode of travel to Flying Shot School was by dog sled. They each had a dog and sled and would race Andy Pivert, a neighbor, in his model T Ford. The dogs would nearly always outrun the car. At other times they would ride horseback or ski behind the horse in the winter, which usually resulted in a few bumps and minor bruises. Like most boys they got the notion for bicycles, so they set out to cut down trees in the bush and to chop it into firewood to sell to people in town. A bachelor neighbor, Jim Aylesworth, helped them sell the vegetables they grew in their gardens. Little by little the bicycles became a reality.

The boys were actively involved in Boy Scouts in the district and during their teen years attended Cadet Camp at Vernon and Calgary. Alex went on to fall trees across the Wapiti in winter and worked at the planer mill in Dimsdale. Ted finished high school and took a job as elevator agent at Sexsmith and later in Dawson Creek.

Ted married Anne Wood in January, 1954 and they had two children Curtis and Dianne. They lived in Sexsmith where he was elevator agent. Anne passed away in November, 1956 of polio.



Ted and Ann Cameron.

In Septembr, 1958 Ted married Claris Johnson and they had a little girl, Candis. Ted and Claris lost their lives in a tragic boating accident on Lake Saskatoon, May 20, 1960.

Alex married Jean Scorgie in 1954 and has three children Terry, Shelley and Sandee. Alex worked for J.B. Tissington Construction for eighteen years in Grande Prairie and then moved to his folks' farm in Flying Shot in 1970 where he operates a mixed grain and beef farm.



Ted, Claris, Curtis, Dianne and Candis Cameron.

The Robert Cameron Family

Bob Cameron was born in January 1891, in Huntley, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He had seven brothers and seven sisters. In 1912 (the year the Titanic went down) he left Scotland and came to Mayfield, Idaho, at the request of a cousin, John Allan. He worked as a sheep herder and also worked near Boise, Idaho, until January 1913, when he went to Kellogg, Idaho, where his brother Jack lived. He worked there in the Bunker Hill mines until the spring of 1915. The year before a Mr. Harry Ayres came from Boise to the Peace River country and he wrote back to the Camerons in Kellogg urging them to come north. Bob and his brother Alex came by CNR to Edmonton and on

to High Prairie by E.D. & B.C. railroad. When they arrived at High Prairie, they were asleep on the train and the conductor woke them and let them off but forgot to put off their bedding and suitcases, so they had to wait until the train returned from Reno before they could continue to Grande Prairie, going by way of Sturgeon Lake and crossing the Smoky at the old Bezanson townsite which was upstream from the present crossing. They rode and walked the trip with Alex Wishart.

They filed for land on April 6, 1915, Bob on his homestead NW 32-70-6-W6 in the Flying Shot Lake district. The land office was at Lake Saskatoon. He rode there to pay $10 (plus improvement). Bob built his cabin and broke his first acres in the summer of 1915. He worked for Harry Ayres and in return he had the use of his horses and plow. The cabin was built with the logs up and down and a thatched roof of hay from a slough on the farm. The plaster did not stick very well with the logs up and down. The stove for his cabin was purchased from the store at Lake Saskatoon. Bob later bought a quarter of land from Mr. Brady, NE 32-70-6-W6.

In November 1932, Bob married Annie Laverick who was living and working in the Kleskun Hill area. Annie was born in Lythe, Yorkshire, England, in November 1911. She has three sisters and two brothers. She came to Canada in May 1930, with one sister and one brother, joining her father and another brother.



Margaret, Barbara and Dorothy Cameron.

Bob and Annie had three girls, Margaret, who passed away at nine years, Dorothy who is married to Fred Mason and Barbara, who is married to Stanley Moe. Fred and Dorothy have four children, Darcy, Allan, Becky and Faye. Stan and Barbara have three girls, Brenda, Kathy and Lori. Stan has been the County Reeve for a number of years.

In the fall of 1972 Bob and Annie sold the farm to Dorothy and Fred, and in January of 1973 they moved to Grande Prairie where Bob passed away in 1975. In late



Back: Stan Moe holding Laurie, Barbara Moe (Cameron), Annie, Bob Cameron.
Middle: Fred Mason holding Fay, Darcy Mason, Kathy Moe, Brenda Moe, Dorothy Mason (Cameron).
Front: Becky and Allan Mason.

1976, Fred, Dorothy and family moved into the house on the farm while a new one was being built, and the next spring they moved into it.

Bob told many stories of the early days in the Flying Shot district, some happy and some sad. He recalled a happening on what was then the Paul Larsen farm, of Mr. Sundal and his nephew who dug a shallow well to the depth of about 40 or 50 feet, then stopped for the weekend. When they resumed work at the beginning of the week, one of the men entered the well and the other man soon realized that something had gone wrong so he went down to help. He too was overcome with coal gas that had accumulated over the weekend. A third man would have gone down also, but his wife would not let him.

He told of another man who always took his new overalls to the chopping block and used the axe to shorten the too-long legs. His son had a new suit for the Christmas concert and thought the legs should be shortened too, so he took them to the chopping block and promptly cut some off just like Dad did.

Much of the lumber Bob used in the new house was cut by the Wapiti River and sawed in the Tissington mill then hauled up the steep banks with horses. He also spoke of digging coal on the south banks of the river and piling it up in the summer time, then when the river was frozen over they would haul it home.

Bob told about a time when an early snow came and stayed, his potatoes were left in the ground. As the earth did not freeze, they were able to dig them in the spring and they were still good to eat.

Another year he had a beautiful crop of fescue ready to harvest, the combine made one round in the evening, that night a terrific wind came and completely ruined the crop and they were unable to harvest any.

The Charles Conley Family

Charles Conley married Elizabeth Jane Campbell, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Silvertip Campbell. Charles, Elizabeth and family of ten children moved into the Fly-



Elizabeth and Charlie Conley.

ing Shot area in 1921. They first lived on a farm by Flying Shot Lake, later they sold one lot to Jimmy Oliver and one lot to Jimmy James. Their children were John, Lawrence, Glen, Jean, Frances, May, Mike, Eva, Gordon and Betty.

While living on their lot by Flying Shot Lake, Glen, Jean, Frances, and May attended the Flying Shot school. John and Lawrence had finished their schooling before the move to the Flying Shot area.

Charles and wife had built a large new home on the lot by the lake, but lost it to a fire six months later. The older girls were living in Grande Prairie to go to high school. Mrs. Humphrey was their housekeeper. When the fire struck, the rest of the family moved into Grande Prairie, too.

Mike, Eva, Gordon and Betty went to school in Grande Prairie at this time. Later the family moved back to the farm by the lake where the children again went to the Flying Shot school, where Mr. Foy was then teaching. When Mr. Foy passed away, his daughter Helen was their teacher.

Eva remembers Mrs. Clifford being her first teacher in Grande Prairie. The Cliffords also lived in the Flying Shot area at one time and it is interesting to note that their daughter was the first white child born in this area.

Mr. and Mrs. Conley homesteaded land near the Wapiti River, near what is called the Big Seven. The Conleys spent their summers there, returning to live in Grande Prairie in the winter months.

In Mr. and Mrs. Conley's later years they built a house in Grande Prairie, where they lived until they passed away in 1954. Their bachelor son, Gordon passed away later that same year.

After Mr. and Mrs. Conley passed away Gerard Tissington bought the homestead land.

Frances married Bill Dick, who was a policeman. Frances worked in Patty Croken's store in Grande Prairie for many years. Later she and Bill moved to B.C. They had two children, Barbara and Billy. They are both physical education teachers; Billy and family live in Burnaby, B.C. and Barbara in Kamloops, B.C.

Glen married Ruth Grimmett, who was a teacher. Glen did carpenter work. They had two girls. Darlene, who married Bob Dean, a policeman, lives in Naniamo, B.C. Arlie married Frank Tissington, who had a garage business in Grande Prairie for some time, moving later to Arizona because of their son, Cameron's health. They are now living on Victoria Island, B.C.

May married Newton Grimmett, who was a teacher. There were no children from this marriage. They lived in B.C. Newton has passed away and May still lives in B.C.

Eva married Bud Ireland of Grande Prairie. They had three children, Gail, Lloyd and Danny. Gail married Ray Moleen, who is a fireman in Edmonton. Lloyd married Terry Lyn Shannon. They live on a farm between Sexsmith and Grande Prairie. Danny is a trucker and lives in Edmonton.

Jean married Jack Stevenson. They farmed in the Dimsdale area until they retired from the farm and moved into Grande Prairie. They had two children, Alfred and Sharon. Alfred married Denise Doyle. Alfred is a carpet layer, working for G.P. Flooring and Drapery in Grande Prairie. Sharon married Ron Brons and they live on a farm west of Grande Prairie.

Mike married Stella Siemens. Mike worked as a carpenter. They had three boys, Bill, Bob and Pat.



Jean Stephenson, Glen Conley, Betty Head, Mae Grimmett, John Conley, Eva Ireland, missing Lawrence, Gordon, Mike and Frances.

John married Nellie Massey. John worked for Alberta Power for many years. They have five children - Joyce Hagen living in Prince George, B.C. Tom married Doreen Tone. He is a travelling salesman and lives in Grande Prairie. Jackie married Carol Popkey. They run a motel in Quesnel, B.C. Dorothy is married to Steve Phillips and he is a mill worker at McKenzie, B.C. John married Rose Harris. He is a painter and they live in Kamloops, B.C.

Lawrence married Pauline Anderson and lived in Grande Prairie a long time. Later they moved to Edmonton, where they lived until they passed away. They had three children, Patsy, Gordon and Erin. Patsy married Terry Mason, who lives in Tomahawk, Alberta and

is an office worker for Imperial Oil fields. Gordon played shy and remained a bachelor. He lives in San Francisco, California. Erin married Stanley Standard and they have a dairy farm at Sherwood park, Edmonton, Alberta.

Betty married Sherman Head. Her family's story will be found in the Grovedale portion of this book.

The Ken Davies Family

by Ken Davies

I was born October 2, 1925 at Portage LaPrairie, Manitoba. My mother and brother, Pat, and I came to Grande Prairie in 1938 to live with my father. During the depression he had come to Peace River and Grande Prairie to find work. We went to the Montrose school.

I spent two years in the Navy, after which I purchased the Tom Waterman farm, E½ 12-71-7-W6, in November, 1946. I soon tired of my own cooking and took a bride, Mabel Hugel, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Hugel. We were married January, 1947.

We farmed and hauled fire wood to Grande Prairie for a couple of years. After that we farmed and spent winters in a saw mill at Big Mountain.

About 1957 we purchased the Grafton McLeven half section at Dimsdale, one quarter of which we still have.

We have four boys, all of which were interested in 4-H work and other community activities.



Lloyd Massee, Ken and Mabel Davies, Dale, Brian, Wayne and Pat Davies.

Wayne, the oldest farms at Dimsdale, and is married to Velvet Kimmett. They have three girls, Jessie, Grace and Lee.

Dale was next; he married Donna Steinke. They live at Cranbrook, B.C. and have three children, Tara, Kyla and Steven.

Then Brian came along. He married Donna Fearon of Edmonton. They live in Fox Creek.

The fourth son, Pat, married Cecelia Cameron of Dawson Creek, where they now live.

For Wayne's first three years of school he rode the old saddle horse to Flying Shot school, where Mrs. Helen Tissington was his teacher. Then Harry Balfour started and the boys all went there, then on to the Grande Prairie Composite High School to further their education.



Pat, Brian, Dale, Donna, Velvet and Wayne Davies.
Ken and Mabel's 25th Anniversary.

Wayne went to Fairview Agriculture School. Brian took forestry at the University of Alberta. Dale went to work for Westburne in Grande Prairie and was transferred to Cranbrook. Pat took a Business Administration course and is with Horse and Rider Western Wear in Dawson Creek.

We had our ups and downs in farming, working out every winter to keep the bills paid and things going ahead.

In 1963 we had a very dry year. It was either find pasture for the cows or sell them. We found lots of grass in the bush south of Grovedale. After much hurry we got head tax and a registered brand. We branded the cattle and took them over there for the summer. We did this for three years. Then, with some of the neighbors, we formed the Campbell Creek Grazing Association and today it is a big thing. Upwards of eight or nine hundred head of cattle go there every summer.

In the fall of 1963 our old barn burned, one saddle horse, our saddles, harness and other barn tools were all destroyed. The neighbors came and helped and soon we had another barn. Neighbors are a wonderful asset, especially when one is in trouble.

Ken farmed, ranched and worked out for others until a couple of years ago when he bought two logging trucks. He rented the farm to Wayne and this is the way things are today.

The Diederich Family

Henry and Myrtle Diederich, with their children and Henry's uncle, Joe Diederich, moved to the Dimsdale area in the summer of 1968, onto what is known as the old Mitchell place. Until moving here, Henry had lived at Bezanson, Alberta all of his life, except for one year in the Armed Forces.

Uncle Joe had passed away two years after moving here.

Their children, Danny, Donna, Trudy, Barry and Clint were active in school sports, hockey, softball, curling, track and field, 4-H Beef Club and the Dimsdale Youth Club.

Danny attended the Grande Prairie Composite High School. He married one of the neighbour girls, Maureen Duffy. They reside in Wembley, Alberta and he works for Procter and Gamble Cellulose. They have two

children, Shane born April 20, 1972, and Shawna, August 11, 1978.

Donna attended the St. Joseph's Catholic High School in Grande Prairie. Donna was very interested in going through for a Lab Technician but as she had only just turned 17 when she graduated, she was forced to pursue another field. She then attended the Grande Prairie Business College. She married her childhood sweetheart, Don McNally from Bezanson. They reside in Little Smoky, Alberta where Don is employed by Peace Pipe. They have two boys, Bret born December 13, 1976 and Darby born December 9, 1977.

Trudy attended Harry Balfour school and the Composite High school. She met Garry Mayne at one of the Dimsdale Bonspiels in 1973. They were married in 1978 and reside by Flying Shot Lake, just south of the airport. Trudy is employed by Social Services and Community Health and Garry by Shell Canada Limited.

Barry attended Harry Balfour, Composite High school and the Grande Prairie Regional College. He resides with his parents and is employed by Golden Peace Realty in Grande Prairie. He enjoys downhill skiing and was very active in sports and football in school.

Clint is in grade 10 this year and attends the Grande Prairie Composite High School. He enjoys playing football for the Composite Bears and hockey for the Flying Shot Lakers.

Danny and Garry also play hockey for the Flying Shot Lakers, and Trudy plays ball for the Dimsdale Raiders.

William Dunkley

by Em Dunkley

William, William Dunkley,
King of the Feedlot men.

Born at Secretan, on prairies green
William Lawrence, nineteen fifteen.
Wild open land where cattle roam
This was the place that he called home.

Early training on range or lot,
Handling cattle nature taught,
Roping, branding, doctoring too,
All skills needed, he then knew.

Nineteen hundred forty-one,
Wedding took place as is often done.
Emma Solberg and Bill Dunkley
Married in Moose Jaw happily.



Lillian and Warren, Emma and Bill Dunkley.

The rented farm from his parents dear
Became our home for many a year.
This we bought as they grew old,
To keep it in the family fold.

Barbara Arlene in forty-four,
Nine years till son then knocked at the door.
Son, Warren Barry, and daughter one,
Family we had to share our fun.

As many from Saskatchewan,
We sold our farm and then moved on.
We heeded well the voice of old -
"Go west young man," as old time told.

Prince George, first stop, we never liked
So packed our goods and on we hiked,
By car and truck, o'er snow and ice,
To Wembley first, then moved on twice.

Bunyan, Johnson, then Stan Moore -
Three feedlots built but wells were poor.
Success we found in what we sought
And moved to dear old Flying Shot.

Kees Blom farm, sold to Ed Yates,
Then to us, so "Thank you, Mates."
For access road we moved the yard,
Starting from scratch and working hard.

First came the pens, and then the well,
Need for house then rang the bell.
This we built by our own hands
Welcomed by neighbors, as staunch friends.

Board upon board our muscles strained
Cutting the rafters though ne'er trained.
Two weeks we worked, then we moved in.
Hard work? You bet! But that's no sin.

We bought Lot Twelve, June 'sixty-one,
Then built it up and said, "Well done."
The cattle came from far and near.
Some patrons seemed to have no fear.

"Dunkley's Custom Feeding," said our sign.
With friends and patrons we got on fine.
Medicines sold added labor for two,
Each day brought folks for friendships new.

"For cheaper feeding, better gain"
The owners worked and not in vain.
Till nineteen hundred plus some more
As patrons clamored at our door.

Parties, dances, visits and cards,
Neighbors all the grandest pards,
Overcame troubles, mile after mile,
Neighbor helped neighbor, that's the style.

Time marched along, as sure it will,
Good times and bad, not all up hill.
Our daughter, Barb., a lady then,
Married, with daughters sweet, ye ken.

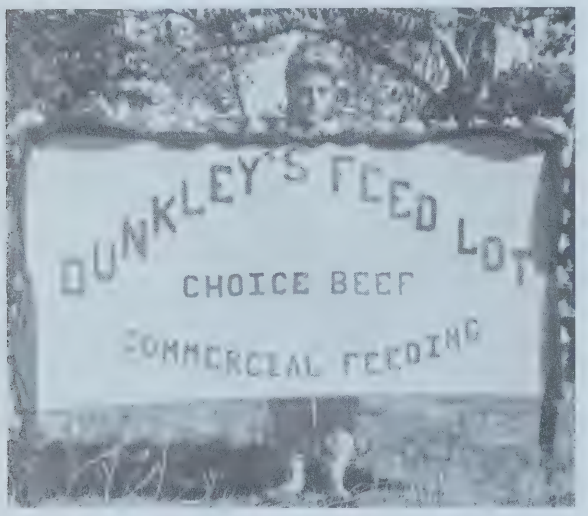
Son, Warren B. to Varsity went
To gain education for future bent.

Bachelor of Science was his degree.
Wed Lillian Kolacz and lived happily.

Worked for Environment, loved nature you see,
Met death Lac La Biche, at age twenty-three.
With loss of heir our interest decreased,
Though love of feeding never ceased.

Two years later, in 'seventy-nine,
The Master Hand then drew the line,
April third, Bill met his fate,
With a heart attack at the corral gate.

Chorus:
William, William, Dunkley,
King of the Feedlot men.



Barbara Dunkley behind her father's feed-lot sign.

The Shada and Herman Dunbar Story

by Shada Dunbar

I, Mrs. Shada Ann Dunbar was born near Garwin, Iowa, in March 9, 1888. We lived on a farm and my father was a minister of the Brethren Church. I had nine brothers and sisters.

On December 13, 1905, I married Herman Edwin Dunbar, who was born in Iowa. The wedding was in our home, my father officiating, and we bought a farm and stayed near my parents for 12 years. We had cousins in Canada, who asked us to visit them, which we did in July, 1917, at Vulcan, Alberta. We liked it there, so we sold our farm in Iowa, and farmed near Vulcan in southern Alberta for 13 years. We had five children, Olive, Freeda, Doyle, and the twins, Marvel and Marie.

That fall we took care of our cousin's farm while they took their son, who had died of diabetes, to the States for burial.

That winter and spring the flu raged, when so many were ill and died. We were all sick, and when we were better we rented the Noel and Walker section of land, owned by Edwin Hurne who had enlisted in the Army. We took over for five years. The children went to Harvey school until it burned down, and then we got them a pony - Pacer by name - and they drove him with a cart to Vulcan school.

In 1925 we moved near Kirkcaldy on the Mr. Holister farm. The children went to Kirkcaldy school. Olive married Eugene Russell Kuykendall December 13, 1927, and in the spring they took a carload of machinery, horses and vegetables to the Peace River Country, renting a farm from Jim Donaldson on Bear Lake. We visited them in 1928. We came by car. The roads were in terrible shape - some corduroy - all of it axle deep in mud. We took the Slave Lake route. At one place we made 35 miles in seven hours! Teams of horses had been stationed at certain points by the Government in order to help travellers like ourselves out of the mud. I remember spending a night at Moody's Crossing because the ferry did not operate at night.

While we were at Kirkcaldy, our second oldest daughter, Freeda was married to William Albert Maisey. The Miaseys live in Kirkcaldy.

Our first view of the Grande Prairie district after crossing the Smoky River was impressive enough for us to decide that this was where we wanted to move, which we did in March, 1930.

We were on the Mervin Kerr farm four miles north of Grande Prairie for the first year. Mr. Kerr had bought the farm the previous year and asked us to take care of it until he could move from Vulcan the next spring. We lived on the O.B. Harris farm for four years while my husband farmed land in that area. The twins attended Percy school while we lived here. We then rented the Hugh Ferguson farm - the Fergusons were Edson Trail pioneers - and lived on this farm for 16 years in the Flying Shot district.

Marie Lucile attended the Peace River Bible Institute in Sexsmith for two years. Doyle had previously attended the Alberta Bible College in Lethbridge for one year. Marvel and Marie accompanied him to enroll there. After the College moved to Calgary, they continued attendance there. Marvel and Marie graduated in 1941.

Marvel married Alma Marie Gonyea in 1941 and Marie married Frank Rempel in 1942 - a fellow student who had also come from Grande Prairie. Frank took five years of College. Both the twins have continued in the ministry, Marvel having held lengthy pastorates in Prince Edward Island, Tacoma, Washington and Cerea, California.

Marie and Frank chose to go to India as missionaries in 1949, where they served until 1969. They came home to Grande Prairie, were here four years, then went to Nairobi, Kenya, and were there four years. Frank passed away December 28, 1978 in Grande Prairie, and Marie is still here. They had two boys.

In 1950 my husband and I bought the Paknoski farm five miles north and four miles east of Grande Prairie. In order for us to live close to the highway, our son-in-law, Gene Kuykendall allowed us to live on his land which adjoined our farm.

Our second daughter, Freeda still lives in Kirkcaldy and had one son, Darrel Roger Maisey. He married Mabel Reath and they have a son, Murray, and a daughter, Suzanne. They live in Lethbridge, where Darrel teaches.

Our eldest son, Doyle Duane served in World War II. After the war, he came back to Grande Prairie and married Norma Jean Enman from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Doyle bought the Maile farm under the Veteran's Land Administration, which he sold and moved to Seattle, Washington in 1955 where they now live.

My husband, Herman Dunbar, passed away February 29, 1956. His death occured two months after we had been married 50 years. The actual date of our anniversary was December 13, 1905, but because Marie was home

from India, we celebrated it earlier. After my husband's death, I rented our farm to our grandson, Lyle Kuykendall and I lived with my daughter and son-in-law for 16 years. The land was later sold to Lyle. Olive Kuykendall, my eldest daughter, passed away on January 14, 1972 and is buried in the Grande Prairie Cemetery along with her father.

Since I broke my hip my travels have been curtailed somewhat, though not entirely. I have been able since to visit relatives in Iowa, Seattle and California. I am 91 years of age. We never regretted moving to the Peace River country where we have had a good life shared by a great host of friends.

The Allan Eskdale Family

Allan was sixteen on arriving in the Flying Shot area along with Aunt and Uncle, Dick and Nellie and son Tom.

Allan went out working as soon as possible and remembers many areas around Grande Prairie that he has plowed, threshed or driven cattle on. Bill Salmond hired him to herd cattle where Safeway Store is now, and he remembers the awesome sight of a car coming over Caldwell's hill just north of town. He recalls how he would jump on his horse and ride like hell to see the car go by.

Allan joined the Army in June of 1941 and met Jessie, his wife-to-be, in Scotland. On their return to Canada they farmed the J.B. Oliver farm for six and a half years. After that they moved to their own farm which was originally owned by Adam Calliou, on the north side of Flying Shot Lake.

Three children were born to them: Ken, Roberta and Kerry.



Alan, Jessie, Roberta, and Kenneth Eskdale. Butch Walters reading book.

Flying Shot was a good community to live in with many happy times amongst the hard ones during those pre-war years. One of the good times was the annual school picnic and dance at end of term; the plays that were put on during the winter months, with many hours of practise and good laughs during the rehearsals. Last but not least, the Christmas Concerts, everyone coming with team and sleighs to the old school. Card parties were another opportunity to get together, and birthdays; anyone's birthday.

With the coming of centralized schools and improved roads, many of these good times just ended due to people turning to the city for their entertainment.

Allan, Jessie and daughter, Kerry live in Drumheller, where he is steam engineer at Drumheller Federal Penitentiary.

The Dick Eskdale Family

by Tom Eskdale

Being only six years of age when we left Scotland, I'm not too sure of the date, but I think we left May 28, 1926, and arrived in Grande Prairie on June 12 in what seemed to us a real "no man's land". The family in those days consisted of Mother and Dad, known to most people as "Nellie and Dick", Grandfather Eskdale, and my cousin Allan. My sister Jean was born on September 1, 1926. We moved to a half section of land eight miles south west of Grande Prairie and had the feeling that we were the only people around.



Dick, Tom, Jean, Allan, and Grandpa Eskdale.



Dick and Nellie Eskdale.

Our nearest neighbours were the Jim Tissington family, one mile east. All of us kids would gather on Sundays and have our weekly ball games. Then we would all track into the house for supper, and Winnie Tissington, now Mrs. Harold Stephenson would have plenty of food ready for use. Thanks Winnie.

When war was declared, I joined the Army and was away for nearly five years; serving in Italy, North Africa, Holland and Germany. At war's end I married Betty, my wife. She moved to Grande Prairie, July 4, 1946. We raised seven children, all of which are hale and hearty. For Betty it must have been a real shock, coming from the middle of Portsmouth to a farm in Canada, but pretty soon she was just as Canadian as the rest of us and never ever complaining about anything. We have been married for 33 years.

I am presently employed by North Canadian Forest Industries and am in my 24th year with the Company. It's the longest job I ever had, worked in coal mines, lumber camps and on farms.

My Mother, Nellie, passed away March 7, 1976 at age 82, my sister Jean (Mrs. Alf Walters) passed away March, 1975 at age 48. My Dad is still alive at age 89 and living with us in Grande Prairie.

At this time we have three married daughters and four grandchildren.



Betty, Tom, Jimmy, Elaine, Audrey and Sandra Eskdale.

The Hugh Fergusons

Herald Tribune - June 8, 1950

"Word has been received of the death in Bellingham, Washington, of Hugh Ferguson, pioneer of the Peace and early settler in the Richmond Hill district."

"Born in Ontario, July 1858, he came to the Peace River over the Edson Trail with Mrs. Ferguson in 1911. They had one saddle pony and Mrs. Ferguson rode most of the way. In 1912 they filed on land in the Richmond Hill district."

"Mr. Ferguson's skill with the axe and broad-axe was well known. He hewed the logs for the little church at Spring Creek, helped with erection of the building itself and served on the board of the church for some years. Each year he has sent a contribution to the upkeep of the Dimsdale Church as it is now called."

"He retired from active farming some years ago and moved to Bellingham, Washington, although he has returned for the old timers' picnic each year."

"Surviving relations are his wife and several nephews."



Hugh and Mrs. Ferguson, Dad Dillon taken in 1934.

April 1, 1954

"Word has been received here that Ms. Hugh Ferguson, former resident of Grande Prairie has died at the age of 89 years. Mrs. Ferguson together with her husband came into the Peace Country over the Edson Trail in 1911. Mr. Ferguson predeceased his wife a few years ago."

George Finch Story

George (Slim) Finch was born in Texas, U.S.A. Before coming to Canada, Slim travelled every State in the U.S.A. He then came clear across Canada to Edmonton where he helped build the High Level bridge. While working there he met Bob Beemman and they decided to come to the great Peace River country, so they got rigged out with two team of oxen and over the Long Trail they came in the early 1900's. Bob took a homestead near Wembley, which was later Jim Smith's place. Slim went on to Aspen Ridge for a homestead, and decided to start a horse ranch. He went back to Edmonton and brought back 20 mares and a stallion. As other homesteaders came, however, he couldn't have open range, so he gave up his Aspen Ridge homestead, and found another at Valhalla.

Slim made many trips to Edmonton hauling freight over the Edson Trail. On one trip he bought four broncs in Edmonton. The only way he could get them hooked up was to snub them to trees and have someone untie them, then away they went. Mr. Percy Tooley came to Grande Prairie with him on that trip, and asked how he came, Mr. Tooley said, "I came with Jessie James and four broncs."

On another trip Slim and partner were attempting to bring in a keg of whiskey. When met on the trail by some people heading back to Edmonton who told Slim the R.C.M.P. were searching all wagons for illegal possessions, Slim and partner, Baldy Red, kept on coming anyway. They caught up to a priest and two nuns that were having problems with their horses so Slim told them they would travel with them for awhile and help them. They then managed to smuggle the keg of whiskey into the priest's wagon under his cargo and on they went. In



Slim Finch.

due course they met the R.C.M.P. and were searched thoroughly to no avail. When the priest offered his wagon for search the R.C.M.P. said no they were sure he was clean, so on again until after dark when the whiskey was returned to Slim's wagon. Slim and Baldy bade farewell to their companions in the morning and headed on their way.

Slim also packed supplies for a survey crew. He left April 1 and didn't return until Christmas day. They surveyed 36 townships in Grouard. In all that time Slim never slept in a house.

When Lake Saskatoon started to build Slim sold his homestead at Valhalla and started a livery barn, and his wife Fern ran the stopping house at Lake Saskatoon.

Slim also worked for Frank Donald. He helped build the railroad north of Grande Prairie, also in the Flying Shot Lake area, as well as two or three miles on the other side of Wembley.

When the railroad missed Lake Saskatoon, Slim moved some of the buildings to Wembley. He used 28 horses to move one big two storey building. He also moved the Lake Saskatoon court house to Wembley and used it for a bunk house and scale house. He built 15 granaries and stored grain until the elevators were built, so the homesteaders could sell their grain. Slim had the livery stable in Wembley. He always had lots of horses for sale or trade. He always had a horse for anyone to use to put their crop in and when done they'd bring them back to him if they couldn't afford to pay for them. He kept two teams of drivers, one for taking the doctor on calls and one for the use of the R.C.M.P.

Slim had a great love for all children. Some of the old timers said if it wasn't for Slim Finch, their children would never have known what candy was. If Slim didn't have candy for them, they could always count on a nickel or dime.

In 1932 Slim bought three quarters of land from the Soldier Settlement Board and one from a Mr. Wilson in the Flying Shot district. They are NE 28-70-6-W6, SW 34-70-6-W6, SE 33-70-6-W6 and NE 33-70-6-W6. Here Slim and son Lloyd started building their ranch. The old Lake Saskatchewan court house he moved to Wembley was dismantled and put up on the ranch for a cow barn. The Diamond T Warehouse Slim moved from Lake Saskatoon to Wembley was also dismantled and built on the ranch. So started the many trips back and forth.

Slim had a set of open bells he used on his mule teams and Jim Tissington can remember listening for the bells when he got out of school and if he could hear them he would wait and Slim would give him a ride home as he went right past the door. To a small boy this was a real experience.

By 1934 Slim and Lloyd had the ranch ready for the stock, so they herded them down, horses, mules and cattle. They made quite a sight. Finches still made Wembley their main home and came to the ranch to feed and care for their livestock until 1937 when they moved to stay. Here Slim had found the one spot of all his travels to settle down, where he lived and ranched until his death in 1958. One of the high spots in Slim's later years was a year long visit from his old friend Bob Beemman in the early 1950's. When the Smoky Bridge was opened Slim took part in the parade with a beer keg on a mule to represent Baldy Red.

In the late 1940's Slim took the bus to Edmonton and at every stop he asked the driver how long the stop was as he wanted to visit someone. The bus driver said he never knew anyone who knew so many people.

Lloyd finished school at Flying Shot in 1938 and was very active in community affairs. Here Lloyd met Mary Cameron and got bitten by the love bug. They were married in January of 1942. In due course a son Thomas George (Tom) was born.



Lloyd and Mary Finch.

Lloyd served in the army for a year in 1944-1945. In 1947 another son Robert Lloyd (Bob) joined the family, in 1949 a son William Alexander (Bill), and again a son in 1951, Kenneth James (Jim). In 1957 a daughter, Linda Darlene, was born. 1965 saw another daughter, Irene Mary, to round out the family.

Tom married Jean Cranston and they have four children, Rose Marie, Allen, Bonnie and Erin. They have a farm in Grovedale.

Bob married Ruth Alloway and lives on the ranch and raises purebred racing quarter horses.

Bill married Brenda Henning and has three children Tina, Jason and Natalie. They have a dairy farm south of the ranch and raise purebred Jersey cows and ship bulk milk to Grande Prairie.

Jim married Patricia Collins, they have a daughter Cora. Jim has a great love of all animal and birds, such as cattle, sheep, pigs, turkeys, chickens, doves, ducks, pigeons and peahens.

Linda married Roy McAusland and farms in Grovedale.

Irene is at home and attends school at Harry Balfour.

The Joshua Fletcher Family

Joshua Fletcher was born May 28, 1866 in Shawville, Quebec, the youngest member of a family which included five adult half-brothers, four sisters and himself. His parents moved the young family to Walkerton, Ontario. Here their father continued his trade as a tailor and the children received primary and secondary education. "Jos" graduated from business college in Hamilton and was employed in Christie's Biscuit Factory in Toronto.

In the spring of 1886 he joined a work crew which went west to build snow sheds and repair slide damage on the newly built railway through the mountains. That fall he continued to Vancouver where he became involved in the retail business. After several years he disposed of his business and was employed with MacMillan and Hamilton, wholesale distributors of Vancouver. He was directed into the Columbia River area where he became warehouse manager at Nakusp.

After eighteen years spent in British Columbia, Mr. Fletcher arrived in Alberta, May 8, 1904 with his youngest sister and brother-in-law. They made their home on a farm at Ellerslie. While here, he was selected as a federal agent to Britain. His work was to create an awareness of the agricultural opportunities in Western Canada, and to give potential grain buyers a knowledge of the quality of Canadian grain. Two trips were made to the British Isles.

On June 3, 1909 Joshua Fletcher and Ora V. Dickey of Morrisburg, Ontario, were married and returned to make their home at Ellerslie. Ora, born June 10, 1881, was the youngest of three children. She had spent her childhood and youthful years on her father's farm near Chesterville in Dundas County. After completing her schooling she helped with the farm work until her parents retired to Morrisburg.

During this time at Ellerslie Mr. Fletcher spent much effort in the organizational beginning of the United Farmers of Alberta. He was chosen to chair the provincial organizational meeting at which the first executive was elected. Records state that it was a lively meeting, bursting with excitement and difficult to control.

Again attracted to the business world, the couple moved to Edmonton where they became part owners in a retail grocery outlet.

In 1911 a request to his former employer for a position which would afford an opportunity to travel brought an interesting response. A branch of the Dominion Land Office was to be established at Grande Prairie. He was appointed to the position of homestead inspector covering lands west of the Smoky River. In the summer of that year he arrived at Grande Prairie with the Dominion Land Agent, Mr. Arthur S. MacLean.

The trip was made with horses and democrat. The route took them to Athabasca, along the south side of Lesser Slave Lake to Grouard, on to Peace River Crossing, Dunvegan and Grande Prairie. The only serious mishap was a broken rear axle which was securely welded before continuing the journey.

They obtained a temporary building from Mr. John Wilson and on July 15, 1911 they were open for business. The Land Office staff boarded at Mr. and Mrs. Campbell Benson's stopping place.

In the spring of 1912 Mr. Fletcher returned with his wife and infant son. Again they followed the Athabasca Trail to Sawridge (Slave Lake). From here everything was taken by boat to Grouard. On arrival the family made their first home in a log, frame-roofed house owned by John Wilson. It was located on the west bank of Bear Creek.



Joshua and Ora Fletcher and son, 1911.

Mr. John Wilson cut logs to be used in the construction of the new land office. Mr. Fletcher skidded them into accessible piles. The new building was finally erected on the location which is now occupied by the Grande Prairie post office.

The Fletchers later made a more permanent home on the P.J. Tooley homestead at Crystal Lake.

Although surveys had been completed, most of the roads were trails across the countryside. As Mr. Fletcher travelled them with his team and democrat, he was convinced that this was the most beautiful country he had ever seen.

In 1918 the couple purchased land owned by Ray Johnston. The parcel consisted of the NE, SE and SW of 14-71-7-W6. Land office work continued. The homestead rush was over but work in the outlying areas required attention during the summer months.

Three trips were made into the Hudson Hope region, one with Kelly Sunderman's pack outfit and two with the mail wagons. It was a rough trail which required a difficult ford of the Pine River and a penetration of the foothills past Moberly Lake. On the first occasion Mr. Fletcher was happy that Mr. Sunderman had given him a

tall horse; and on one of the second trips he was awed to see the mail bags drenched in the deep water. The bags were opened and the contents dried on the river bank.

Meanwhile there were chores and field duties on the farm. This was accomplished with the aid of hired help.

New buildings were erected. After several expensive failures to obtain water by hand digging, a deep drilled well was successful. It furnished an ample water supply for a few years.

Threshing was done by Cooke's steam outfit.

When the homestead work was finished Mr. Fletcher carried on for a few years by himself. He continued to raise hogs and built a small herd of grade Ayrshire and Guernsey cattle. Two registered Ayrshire cows which he had brought over the Edson Trail and a registered Guernsey bull formed the basis for this project.

In 1923 the railway right-of-way west of Grande Prairie was being surveyed. This bull had his part in that too. The surveyors evidently appeared to him to be intruders. With a little challenge, he sent them scurrying up trees. Here he held them until his owner drove him away. The story was retold 20 years later by Mr. Arthur Southwell of Goodfare who had been one of the ill-fated surveyors.

Interest in community affairs involved school board duties, community league efforts, and United Grain Growers' activities. The family participated in the regular church services held in the Spring Creek Church and later in the Flying Shot School. Mrs. Fletcher provided room and board for Miss Nellie Robson who taught the Wapiti School. She was also an active member of the U.F.W.A. which was organized in the Spring Creek settlement. Later she was in regular attendance at the meetings of the Women's Missionary Society held monthly at the home of Mrs. Robert Mitchell.

In the late 1920's the cultivated land was leased. However the falling grain prices of the thirties made this arrangement increasingly difficult.

Mrs. Fletcher had experienced serious illness in 1935. Again in 1936 she suffered a severe stroke causing damage from which she never fully recovered.

In 1938 they moved to Goodfare. Mrs. Fletcher passed away June 28, 1941 and Mr. Fletcher February 18, 1951. They are buried in the Riverside Cemetery. The couple were predeceased by an infant son, Joshua D., August 14, 1915. Now living are two sons, Arthur Whitney and James Nathaniel, and one daughter, Ada; seven grandchildren, and 12 great grandchildren.

Footnotes

by Ada Schweitzer

I add the following details of the lives of my brothers and myself to our parents' story.

Arthur Whitney was born in Edmonton, January 6, 1911. He has many early memories. One of his first attempts at independence ended in a long roll down the bank of Bear Creek. When the family moved to Crystal Lake he enjoyed the shallow water. On some occasions he went with our father to the land office.

Early in 1915 our mother and Art went East. Art remembers our father taking them to Watino. From here they went by train to Edmonton. The passenger section consisted of two box cars. Each was furnished with benches of rough lumber. Temporary wash rooms were provided and the men and women were segregated. Art was four years old and felt somewhat embarrassed by being included in the ladies' quarters. The trip was slow.

I, Ada Victoria, was born in Edmonton December 6, 1915. My four and one half pounds must not have appeared very impressive. The doctor left with the comment, "She's pretty small but I guess she's all right". I was two years old when the family moved to the farm at Spring Creek. I faintly recall Eleanor and Harry Clifford coming home with my father and Art one winter evening. My mother made lunch for us at the little table.

Art accompanied Mr. Tom Haden on trips to bring home logs for the barn. They had been cut somewhere across the Wapiti and were piled in the vicinity of "Canon Smith's Hill" west of Richmond Hill. The Hawthorne brothers completed the construction.

James Nathaniel was born June 26, 1919. My father's eldest sister, formally Miss E.E. Fletcher but to us Aunt Lizzie, came from Vancouver to visit with us during part of her summer holidays. My father went to Valhalla and brought Miss Louise Lunseth to help with the household tasks. The next summer Grandpa Dickey decided to come west. My brother Jim has always been a dynamic factor in our family story.

Mr. James "Jim" George helped with the farm work for a number of seasons.

Before I was of school age I enjoyed my first car ride from church in Mr. Fred Balmer's Ford. Mr. and Mrs. Balmer had a grazing lease on the north half of school section 11-71-7-W6. They drove that way to check the cattle.

Mr. Pryor, a student minister, came, often on foot, to both Flying Shot and Spring Creek.

My brothers were interested in sports. They spent many evenings on the ball diamond in Ralph Johnston's pasture. Games with neighboring communities were a regular summer entertainment.

Art took his primary school grades at the Wapiti School. By the time I was of school age the Flying Shot School was in operation and we attended there. Miss "Bobbi" Burgess was my grade two teacher. She was a university student in medicine, I believe. She taught the Flying Shot School from May to September. Those few months were very comforting and reassuring to me.

We often went on berry-picking expeditions along the Wapiti. Blueberries and cranberries were usually plentiful. However, the trip best remembered was a visit to our grandfather's homestead. No story of our family would be complete without at least a brief mention of Grandpa Dickey. Nathaniel Dickey arrived from Ontario in 1920. My grandmother had died four or five years earlier and Grandpa chose to spend some of his remaining years "proving up" an Alberta homestead. This he chose in the Hazelmere district. It was located six miles beyond the Red Willow ford (Rio Grande Sports Grounds).

I remember one summer morning when Mother and we three youngsters started out to visit Grandpa. Ill fortune struck early. Our father had given us his best pocket watch. Before we were out of sight of the house it slid down the lap rug and landed directly in front of the buggy wheel. The rest of the trip went well. We arrived at the Red Willow ford south of Rio Grande late in the afternoon. The stream was so clean that the stones and gravel on the bottom were clearly visible everywhere. Six miles more to the southwest and we were in Grandpa's yard. He had a small barn and a fairly large bright one-room cabin with a ladder going up the wall into a high attic. The house faced south and down a little bank the land

flattened into a small grassy marsh. Right at the foot of the hill Grandpa had a beautiful spring of cold water. Milk never tasted so good as it did when Grandpa poured it from the large syrup tins which he had suspended there.

From Grandpa's to our place at Flying Shot was a long distance by travelling standards in those days. Grandpa borrowed "Fanny", one of my father's driving mares and bought himself a good buggy and cutter. With this equipment, he managed to visit us two or three times during each of the next five years. On one of these spring trips he made an uncomfortable mistake, or perhaps it was "Fanny's" choice. A little slough straddled the road allowance west of the Wapiti School. The winter road went through it, dodging the willows, but summer road went around it. This late, dark evening Grandpa unintentionally followed the winter road. He was soon stranded in the slough and could not find his way out until daybreak. It was a long wait for a man of eighty years. We all enjoyed his visits very much. Art (Whitney) was old enough to go home with him on several occasions. Grandpa returned to Morrisburg when his homesteading was finished.

My brothers and I took high school in Grande Prairie. Art attended Camrose Normal School in 1934. He taught at Steeprock School for three years and then he returned to Dimsdale to teach the Wapiti School. The following summer he and Jim established a home for themselves and our parents in the Goodfare district.

I, Ada, attended the Edmonton Normal School and have obtained additional courses from the University of Alberta. I also gained credits from Queen's University by correspondence. I taught for a few years before marrying Val Schweitzer in December of 1943. We established our home at Goodfare. Over the next fifteen years or so, I continued to teach in the area and raise our daughter, Agnes.

Our daughter, Agnes, went to high school in Wembley and attended business college in Grande Prairie. After she married Ernie Simpson, they lived for a while at Courtenay. They returned to Alberta in 1966. They and their three children are now living in Grande Prairie. Ernie is employed at Proctor and Gamble Cellulose. He is an instrumentation technician. Agnes owns and operates the Grande Prairie Pet Shop. Their three children are Allan, Evan and Treena.

My brothers also live in the Goodfare Community. Jim (James) never married. He has worked in many places. He is always busy on the farm in summer. Arthur Whitney (usually known as Art) married Florence Sazwan. They have six children, Gordon, Don, Martin, Helen, Cheryl and Blanche, and nine grandchildren.

The Fried Family

In 1953, Albert and Julia Fried purchased Lots 9, 9A and 10 in the Flying Shot Lake Settlement, from Leslie Rimbey. They came from Spirit River, where they had homesteaded four miles west of the town, coming there as newlyweds from their homes in South Dakota. They were a family of five when they moved to Flying Shot; Albert and Julia and their children, Ronald, Judy and Gordon, though Gordon was working in Dawson Creek, B.C. at the time of the move.

Al set up and ran a mixed farming operation until 1956, when Gordon returned to the farm and they commenced potato farming. In the following years the Frieds cropped potatoes, carrots, cabbages, tomatoes and other



Julia and Albert Fried, Gordon, Judy and Ron.

vegetables. In January, 1957, Julia passed away following a lengthy illness.

Gordon married Beryl Weberg in November, 1957. Beryl was also from Spirit River, and was a nurse. Al and Gordon continued to farm together for the next four years. During this time, Gordon and Beryl had three sons, Quinton in 1959, Spence in 1960 and Guy in 1962. In 1963, Gordon purchased the farm from his dad and the following year began growing strawberries commercially. He has had a "pick it yourself" operation since that time. His acreage is now 20 acres of strawberries. Recently he has added three acres of saskatoons, and in infant stage is one acre of chokecherry trees.



Spencer, Gordon, Guy, Quinton and Beryl Fried.

In the meantime, his brother Ron had joined the staff of the County of Grande Prairie, and worked there for nine years. In 1962 he married Marlene Ulmer. Three years later, Gordon and Ron's sister, Judy, married Stan Hoffman. They have two children, Glen and Shauna, and live at Peace River, where Stan is employed at the Peace River Correctional Institute.

In 1966, Al married Prena Pearson and after running a small grocery for Ron in Grande Prairie, they moved to the acreage at Flying Shot. A couple of years later, Ron bought a 13.56 acre parcel of the southeast corner of Lot 10 from Gordon and moved out, too. He built a home

there and planted raspberries and black currants. He later sold this property to Henry Marquis.

In 1973, Ron, Marlene and their two sons, Neil and Jeff, along with Albert and Prena, all moved to Salmon Arm, B.C., where they now reside. Albert continues to flourish at 81 years. Ron is now working for the Municipality of Enderby, B.C.

Gordon was able to subdivide the remaining portions of Lot 9 and 10 east of the County road in 1976, and sold it to John Gordica. Gordon continues to farm and work part time for Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance. Beryl is no longer nursing, but is now in real estate. Their boys are young adults.

Over the years, Gordon has been active in the County Agricultural Society, the local and Provincial Credit Union, and the local schoolboard. He was also instrumental in forming the Small Fruit Growers Society.

The Wayne Garner Family

by Kay Garner

Wayne and myself came north from Medicine Hat in June, 1956, with two infant daughters, Colleen aged two and Debbie aged six months. Housing was at a premium at that time so we decided to take a stab at country living. We bought a quarter six miles west and one mile south of Grande Prairie which had a large old log house on it. To us, who had only lived in rented accommodation, this house was beautiful. We moved out from Grande Prairie September 15, 1957 after a record snowfall. The move was made with a well ventilated jeep (no top) and an old truck which managed to cough its way to town and back the required number of times.



House built by Floyd South in 1913.

The house was sadly in need of repairs and in the process of making a hole for a switch plate we discovered the date of its completion. Carved on a log was the date January 3, 1913. Because I felt it was important I collected a bit of information on its history. The house was built by Floyd (Buster) South who after the World War I returned to live there with his wife until 1934. Buster passed away in 1934 partly as a result of a war injury. His wife remarried a Mr. Cal Campbell and they were here until 1945. It is said she had a fabulous garden, so productive that she sold vegetables and berries from the back of a wagon in town. The landscaping she did here is still a tribute to her memory.

Three other families resided here before us. Mr. P. Pollock 1945-1949, the Kapusta family 1949-1952 and Mr. and Mrs. Chester Horton from 1952 to 1957.

We felt like homesteaders ourselves as there was no running water, no power and a wood and coal furnace for heat, and of course no money. Let me say at this time that if it hadn't been for our neighbours, the Dan McKeemans, things would have been a lot tougher than they were. However, lots of good experiences like the weekly bath in the square tub in front of an annex, then saving the water to wash floors, taught us conservation. Cooking with coat and mitts on, with one's hair blowing in the wind from large holes in the roof near the chimney helped our appreciation of a propane heater when we finally got one. The odd chimney fire and having to evacuate the house every time the wind switched to the northwest certainly kept a fellow alert. Lots of pets (13 cats, two dogs, two guinea pigs, two rabbits and a pet lamb) kept the kids from being lonesome, and instilled, I'm sure, a certain amount of responsibility.

We lived in the old log house for eight years and during this time, another daughter, Sharon, was born. Our house now was gradually sinking as the large tamarack logs at the base were rotting away and it became impossible to keep the inside much warmer than the outside.



The Garners. Wayne, Kay, Colleen, Sharon and Debbie.

In 1963, we began construction on our present home and did most of the work ourselves. Two years later I picked up pots and food and moved into our nearly completed house. With a great deal of regret we started to take down the logs, however, part of it still serves as a shop at McKeemans.

As a historical footnote there is an old, stone-walled well east of the house which supplied water for a large surrounding area in the early days. It is said also that wandering bands of Indians used to camp just below a hill east of the present buildings. It's nice to be able to tie the past and present together and keep alive the memories of the earlier residents who made our home possible.

Annie (Stemplowski) Green

I, Annie, second child of Peter and Jane Stemplowski was born July 30, 1935 in the Flying Shot District. I attended grade school at Flying Shot grade one to nine, high school in Grande Prairie for grades ten, eleven and twelve, then took a secretarial course at St. Joseph's Business College.

I was employed with W.E. Blackett of Blackett Insurance until my marriage to Albert Green in 1960.

We were blessed with four sons, Greg born in March 1, 1961, Dale in March 27, 1962, Lorne in June 1, 1963, and Darryl in October 5, 1964.



The Green family.
Back: Dale, Bill, Anne, Greg.
Front: Darryl and Lorne.

We are presently residing in Grande Prairie and self-employed with A & S Painting & Decorating Ltd.

My memories of Flying Shot, as I was growing up, are very rewarding to me. I appreciate the luxuries of running water, power and telephone but feel richer by far for having experienced the country living.

Mary (Stemplowski) Grudniski



Mary (Stemplowski), Al and Leonard Grudniski.

I, Mary, was born in the Flying Shot District on February 20, 1941. I attended grade school at Flying Shot from grade one to nine.

I live in Port Alberni, B.C. and am married to Al Grudniski, who is employed with the pulp mill.

We were blessed with two sons Leonard, October 20, 1958, who is now residing in Edmonton, and Alex, May 1961, who is married and residing in B.C.

The William Head Family

Bill Head came to the Peace River Country in 1918 with his father and mother, George and Isabell (Salmond) Head. They came from Cloyne, Ontario, with seven children. Three more children were born in Grande Prairie.

George and Isabell Head rented land west of Grande Prairie, later buying a quarter near where the airport is now. This quarter was homesteaded by Mrs. Head's brother, Ed Salmond, in 1916. Ed Salmond passed away with the flu in 1918 and George Head bought Ed's quarter just west of the airport, moving his family into the little log house that Ed built.

Bill stayed home and helped his Dad until 1936. Then he married May Sterr of Elmworth, Alberta, and moved into the Flying Shot area where he had bought the SE 15-71-6-W6 from his Uncle Bill Salmond. Bill Salmond had bought this land from Celestin Gladu who had homesteaded in 1910 when Flying Shot area was an Indian reserve.

Later, Bill Head also bought the quarter just south of where he lived, NE 10-71-6-W6. This quarter of land was once owned by Alfred Bonlonger in 1913, later owned by Mr. Wiemer, who brushed it by hand with an axe and broke it with horses and breaking plow. Dr. Gurth O'Brien bought this quarter from Mr. Wiemer in the 1940's. When Dr. O'Brien was killed in an airplane accident in Saskatoon Lake, his land was put up for sale. Bill Head bought it at this time, which gave him a half section of good farm land where he continued mixed farming until the year of 1974 when his health was not too good. He sold NE 10-71-6-W6 to Otto Woisetschloger of Grande Prairie in 1975, and SE 15-71-6-W6 to Alf Kulhowe of Grande Prairie, reserving 2.2 acres for his retirement home. On this 2.2 acres he and his wife have started small orchards consisting of apples for pies and sauce, crab apples, choke cherries, goose berries, red currants and black currants, raspberries and strawberries and have planted two plum trees, two Nanking cherries and a golden currant bush.

As for Bill's wife, she was born in Hillman, Minnesota, to Frank and Hannah Sterr on December 24, 1911. Her dad and mother, with eight children, emigrated to Canada in 1924 and rented land near Wetaskiwin, Alberta, for five years where two more children were born.

In 1929, they came to the Peace River Country and settled at Elmworth where Mr. Sterr had bought a quarter of land.

In 1933, May came to the Grande Prairie area to work on the Bert Cooke dairy farm. She met Bill at Fred Cooke's in 1933 and started dating in 1934, ending up at the alter on March 28, 1936, May's mother and dad's anniversary.

Bill and May had five children, Lloyd William was born to them in October 1937, Leslie George in 1940, Percy Lorne in 1942 and in 1943 they had a daughter, Helen May, who died in infancy. In 1945 they were hoping for



May and Bill holding Lorne. L. to R.: Lloyd, Leslie and Percy. Taken in 1946.

another daughter but they had another boy who they named Frank Lorne. When Lorne was seven years old they adopted a daughter Muriel.

Lloyd took his schooling in Grande Prairie and apprenticed for a mechanic. He received his mechanic license at the age of 21 while he was on his honeymoon. He married



Lloyd at back, Leslie then Percy Head with the dog team. They drove to school in the winter - 1940's.

Mary Rathwell on March 30, 1959. They lived in Grande Prairie for some time then moved to Mrs. Rathwell's farm near Clairmont where he lived until his death in April of 1977. His wife Mary and their children lived on the farm until their oldest son, Ronald William, was married on October 6, 1979 and now they live in town. Elizabeth Ann, better known as Betty Ann, and younger son Murray Lee are still on the farm and Ronald helps during the summer and drives truck during the winter.

It is interesting that Lloyd was born on October 1, 1937, and it snowed that day and winter set in. Years later, their son Ronald was born, October 3, and again we had a snow storm that stayed.

Leslie took his schooling in Grande Prairie and went to Vermilion for a two year agriculture course, which he finished in one year and was one of the four honor students.

The year Leslie graduated from high school, we had three Head graduates, Inor Head's daughter, Joan, and Walter Head's daughter, Lorna. Leslie tells of the time one of their teachers, Mrs. O'Brien, called him into her classroom to find out the relationship of the four Heads in high school and wanted to know which one was his sister. No sister among them, they were all cousins, the fourth one being Sherman Head's daughter, Glenda.

After Leslie finished his agriculture course he came back to the home nest and worked for D & B Construction for three months, then decided to plan and build his own house. He married Isabel Richards from east of Grande Prairie, daughter of Walter and Dorothy Richards, on July 7, 1961 and moved to where they still live on SE 6-71-6-W6 in the Flying Shot area. They have three children, Debbie Jean who is now Mrs. Jamie White and lives in the Teepee Creek area, Dwayne and Dianne, who still live at home. Leslie started working for North Canadian Forestry shortly after they were married and is still working there.

Percy was born to May and Bill on February 18, 1942 two days after his Dad's birthday. He also took his schooling in Grande Prairie and at the age of 16 he went to Calgary to work for a Mr. Holden, grooming race horses. Percy married Carol Royle from Foam Lake, Saskatchewan, who was also working at the race tracks. The wedding bells rang for them on April 8, 1962, in a little church in Calgary. Her dairy-farm parents from Foam Lake and his beef-farming parents from Grande Prairie met there to attend their wedding. A year later, Percy and Carol started their family with a son, Michael William and ten years later added another boy, George Percy. Percy and his family live in the Grovedale area.

Muriel took her schooling in Grande Prairie. She married Richard Lawrance and they have five children; Daniel is 17, Linda Lee is 16, Douglas is 13, Katherine is 11 and Angela is ten. The Lawrance family live in a trailer on an acreage near Sexsmith. Muriel works in the office at the Swan Early Bird store.

Last but the tallest of them all, Lorne took his schooling in Grande Prairie and went on to apprentice for heavy duty mechanic, but really preferred farming. He met Marjorie Spiedel while working as a mechanic in Edmonton and they were married in a church in Leduc, August 5, 1967. Lorne worked at truck driving until 1974, and then when his dad took sick he came home to run the farm. He started a dairy business on his dad's farm, and operated it there until 1974, when he moved the herd to a farm nine miles west of Spirit River.

Lorne and Marjorie have four children, Corinne Marjorie, who is ten, Patrick Cory who is seven, Camilla who is five and Christopher who is three.

The Head family story is not completed without some mention of the boy's dog team that they drove to school for five years. When Lloyd started school, Bill Head's uncle, Bill Salmond, gave Lloyd a pup and as the dog, Tim, grew up, Lloyd taught him to pull him to school on a toboggan during the winter months. When Leslie started school, they were given a mate for Tim, Spot. These dogs were Whippet Hounds. When Percy started school the toboggan was crowded so their dad made them a sleigh, which held four of them nicely. We raised two dogs which were added to the team. Two dog houses were placed behind the old creamery building for housing the dogs while the boys were in school. Lloyd, at nine years old, drove his team in the Grande Prairie parade, and for many more years, too. They were also in the parade at the opening of the first Smoky River bridge.

This is written in 1980. Bill and May are still living on their little farm of 2.2 acres. The log barn they built many years ago with the help of a horse and a rope to pull the logs into place, is still standing and in use as a shelter for the new owner's horses.

The Jack Hodges Family

Ethel and Jack Hodges, along with their two small daughters Peggy and Irene, arrived in the Flying Shot district in May, 1926. Jack had spent several years in Canada prior to World War I. On returning to England after four years spent in the army in Egypt and Palestine, he felt the desire to return to Canada and settle there permanently. He and Ethel (nee Hulme) were married in London in June, 1920, but it was not until the threat of the great British strikes of 1926 that they finally applied to emigrate under the Soldier Settlement Board Scheme.

Their first home was a frame four-room house on what is presently the farm of Gerard Tissington. With the planting season well advanced and no equipment for seeding, Jack went to work on the farm of a neighbor, Jim Tissington, in return for getting his crop planted. The days in a lonely farm house a mile and a half from the nearest neighbor with only a four year old and a two yers old for company in a strange new land far from familiar sights and faces were difficult ones for this little mother, Ethel.

It was not until the death of their younger child six weeks after their arrival that the family realized the number of truly kind friends that they had made in that short time. Neighbor ladies made a point of visiting and inviting the grieving mother on berry picking expeditions, Women's Institute meetings and various other gatherings.

It was the sudden illness and death of their child that brought about their acquaintance with the local doctor, Dr. O'Brien, and the matron of the hospital, Miss Hibbs. These two people by some ironic twist of fate had both served in an army hospital in which Jack Hodges had been a patient during his war service in Egypt and Palestine.

That first winter the family were forced to move into Grande Prairie where Jack worked with a railroad crew. With the spring it was back to the farm.

That autumn the new schoolteacher, Miss Ruth Grimmett came to board at the farm. That winter was not a lonely one, for the presence of the young teacher attracted a steady stream of young bachelors who lingered



Ethel and Jack Hodges.

to partake of many a homecooked meal. Needless to say they all pitched in, too, with the chores when Jack was injured by a kick from an unfriendly horse.

Times were difficult but not without many humorous incidents. There was the time when Mrs. Hodges, left alone for the day, spotted a coyote lurking near the yard. Having heard of their liking for poultry she gallantly picked up a brick to heave at the intruder while vainly trying to herd the chickens to the barn.

Then this city bred girl was filled with terror when it was necessary for her to ride in the wagon along with a calf while its mother followed behind. She thought the cow would try to jump into the wagon.

One of the young bachelors newly arrived from Holland and speaking little English volunteered to pluck wild ducks for Mrs. Hodges. When the feathers stubbornly refused to come out, he began addressing them with choice English words learned from other farm hands. When reproved by a fellow country man he blushingly apologized for his picturesque vocabulary.

Possibly one of the funniest incidents occured on Hallowe'en when a delayed harvest found the threshing crew still busy. A couple of young ladies hopped on their saddle horses bent on playing a few jokes on the unsuspecting threshing crew. After their mischief was done they visited at the house. However, from time to time they peeked out to check on their ponies tied in the corrals. Assured of their safety they visited until late in the evening. Imagine their surprise when they found two cows completely saddled and bridled and tied and their horses were nowhere in sight.

In 1929 Mr. and Mrs. Hodges and their daughter moved off the S.S.B. farm into Grande Prairie where they resided for approximately two years. Then two or three more years were spent in rented homes in the Flying Shot District. Even after they took up permanent residence in Grande Prairie in 1933 Flying Shot was still looked upon as home.

The depression years of the early thirties were times when neighbors learned the full meaning of survival through co-operation. A sterling example of this was the way in which three busy mothers contrived to provide a new dress for each of their respective little girls to wear for the high light of the school year - the Christmas concert. There was little ready cash but one mother had enough to buy three lengths of material from a grab bundle from Eaton's catalogue. This lady had a large family which left her little time for sewing. The second mother was a clever seamstress but with three small children and a farm home and chores she found her time very limited so mother number three assisted with the care of the children and household chores. The result of this co-operation - three beautiful little dresses, one salmon pink, one apple green and one royal blue. The three little girls still remember them well.

Mrs. Hodges still was active in the W.M.S. of the Presbyterian Church which had originally been held in the home of Mrs. Robert Mitchell. Her home in "town" was a stopping place for many of her Flying Shot friends on their Saturday shopping expeditions. Here children could be tended, foot warmer bricks reheated and a good gossip over a cup of tea enjoyed before the long cold trip home.

During her life in Grande Prairie Mrs. Hodges maintained a home for expectant farm women that was funded by the Women's Institute. Over three hundred ladies took advantage of this facility during the years of the depression.

Jack Hodges passed away in September of 1953 and Mrs. Hodges continued to live in Grande Prairie with her daughter, Peggy, who became a teacher and taught for two years in the Flying Shot School. Mrs. Hodges died in August 1966.

Peggy Mair, their daughter, with her family still lives in Grande Prairie where she has been teaching for over 30 years.

Peggy still maintains ties with her childhood friends of the Flying Shot District and looks back with fond memories of the hard and happy times spent there.



Peggy, Jim, Irene and Silvia Mair.

The Howenko Story

by Peter Howenko

Peter Howenko left the Ukraine in 1921 and immigrated to Regina, Saskatchewan, where he worked on a farm for some time. Then he worked on the railroad that was being built and that winter he worked in the city.

In 1922 he went back to working with a railroad gang till fall, then in the harvest fields near Regina, going to the city again during the winter months.

The next year he decided to try the United States for work opportunities. He first worked in the State of Minnesota and then went to Chicago, Illinois. His health was not too good there and his doctor advised him to go back to Canada or the Ukraine. While enroute back to Canada, he stopped for awhile in Minneapolis. His health did not improve there so he returned to Regina where he worked on different machines. His wages were $5 per day.

He received a phone call from a friend in Grande Prairie to come work in the harvest fields. In 1926 he spent the winter in Edmonton. Spring came and he met and talked with a gentleman who was a John Deere Machine Company agent. They got talking about buying land near Edmonton as Peter wanted land of his own. The machine agent advised him to go to Peace River Country where land was cheaper, $5 to $7 per quarter section. Peter bought a railroad ticket to Grande Prairie for $14. He was still a single man, or you may say bachelor, at this time. While travelling through on the train he was really taking in the sights of the land they passed through. It was the fall of the year and he noticed the grain crops waving in the breeze, nearly ready to be harvested. It reminded him of the grain fields of his home land, the Ukraine.

Peter rented a horse from Frank Donald, one of our old-timers in Grande Prairie, and went riding, looking over the land. He looked at some land belonging to Mrs. Wicker, but decided there was too much brush and trees on it. After all, you cleared your land with an axe and your muscle, those days. The third or fourth day he was back in Grande Prairie and Frank Donald helped him by suggesting different quarters he knew.

Jack Holton came into the hotel about this time and upon hearing Peter was interested in buying land, looked up Mr. Helga Henderson. Henderson took Peter to his Sexsmith farm where there was lots of work chopping poplar trees with an axe, and thus Peter was employed until harvest. He stayed on and helped Mr. Henderson harvest his crop that fall.

Peter heard that Harley Conrad needed a man stooking grain so he then went to help Mr. Conrad with his harvesting. The wages on the average for stooking was $4 per day.

Mr. Conrad sold Peter a quarter section of land northwest of Sexsmith, all fenced, for $500 with a down payment of $100, the rest to be paid later. There was no land broken for cropping on this quarter. The following spring Peter bought a team of horses and a plow, and started breaking, first enough for a little garden, then some for grain crop.

One of Peter's neighbors told him of some land about five and a half miles from Sexsmith that could be taken as a homestead, so he sold the Conrad land and homesteaded the quarter section.



Robert, Mr. and Mrs. Howenko, Zora, Leda and Vera (front).

While Peter was on the Conrad corner, Cupid's arrow went to work, he met Pearl Mukituk and sometime later they were married.

In 1948 he sold the homestead land and moved into the Flying Shot area where he bought a half of section 5-71-6-W6 from Mr. Griffith who purchased it from Jack Goyne, who in turn had purchased from Cap Bradley. He and his family then moved in to join the other Flying Shot farmers.

Mr. and Mrs. Howenko had four children:

Zora, who is married and lives in Toronto; Leta who is married and lives in Lethbridge; Vera, who is married and lives in Toronto, and Robert, who is not married and is farming the land and lives on the home place with his mother and dad.

Mr. Howenko farmed with horses until 1948 when he bought his first tractor. Their first house on the Sexsmith land was a small log building. On the land where he now lives it is a house built of lumber.

The church they went to was eight miles away, in the little town of Grande Prairie - the United Church.

Their children started school in Sexsmith and then went to the Flying Shot School, then to high school in Grande Prairie.

Neighbors, when he first moved here, were the Alex and Bob Camerons, Pete and Steve Stemplowski, the Hugh Sinclairs, Ernie Watt and Jim Aylsworth.

The Howes Family

The Howes family, George and Winifred and their six children, Cedric, Alan, Sylvia, David, Becky and Peter, arrived in the Flying Shot district in 1934. They had purchased the Watson farm, a two-story, unpainted rambling house and a beautiful garden. The garden, through neglect, was full of crab grass. Despite our attempts this weed was never completely cleared out. However, the soil was good for growing a vegetable garden and with six, and later eight, healthy appetites, a good supply of vegetables was essential.

Cedric, Alan and Sylvia started school that year. They had gone to a little log school at their former home in Lymburn and were sadly behind in some subjects, however, were eventually able to catch up. There was a large enrollment at the school. They went to school with members from the Blom, Stewart, Zahn, Smart, Tissington, Carll, Howell, Eskdale, Hugel, Cameron, Pivert, Ross, Owens and Sinclair families. Softball was the favourite game. None of the Howes children had an aptitude for this game so were not a great help to the school team when it played other districts. When we were younger "Anti-I-Over", touch tag, prisoner's base and so forth were great favourites.

I suppose all have pleasant memories of the Christmas concerts. Mrs. Tissington Sr. playing the music for the children to march up onto the stage and to accompany them as they sang the Christmas songs and carols. Recitations, one act plays and skits. All the parents there. A wonderful audience who clapped the performers whether good or not so good. The decorations, the Christmas tree. Everyone dressed in their best. Then the visit from Santa with a candy bag for each child.

Then in the summer the school picnic. All the children, and I am sure the teacher, looked forward to a two month holiday. A community picnic lunch and homemade ice cream. Here also the parents helped with the races and of course brought all the food that children seem to be able to consume.

On July the first a picnic was held at the Community Hall. There were races for adults and children. Horseshoes and softball games. Lots of food. Lots of fun. A dance in the evening to finish off the day.

The Howes children were lucky that they lived only a couple of miles from school and a very short distance from the Community Hall and little Anglican church. We used to go up on the Sunday morning to put on the altar cloths and put flowers in the vases. We had lilacs and brown eyed Susans. My mother always grew sweet peas, baby's breath and many wild flowers such as the tiger lily.

The Howes family left the Flying Shot district in 1949. The two younger girls, Barbara and Ruth, who were born while we lived in Flying Shot were in grade seven and three respectively at that time. My father had a position in Grande Prairie as city engineer and so the family moved to town. Eventually my mother, father and Barbara and Ruth moved to Dawson Creek and later to the coast.

The family began to break up at that time and my parents moved to Penticton and retired there. They had many good friends in Penticton and were active in the Drama Club and church choir. They were able to make a trip to England and Australia at this time. My father died in 1965 and my mother in 1976.

As for the children - Cedric and his wife, Marjorie, (the last to leave the Grande Prairie area) live in Penticton. They have no children, but have two cats, the "Odd Couple", have a nice home, beautiful flower garden, a few fruit trees and a large vegetable garden.

Alan and his wife, Grace, live in Camrose, Alberta. They have three girls and three boys. Three of the children are married and with the birth of a baby boy, their daughter Wendy's son, Alan and Grace are now grandparents.

Sylvia, who just escaped being the "Old Maid" aunt by marrying in 1978, lives with her husband, Bill in Whitehorse. They have plans to move to a warmer climate in the not too distant future. Bill is a retired civil servant and Sylvia works for the Yukon Territorial government.

David and his wife, Evelyn, live in Regina. They have three sons and one daughter. Dave works for a construction company. Two of the children are working and two are still attending high school. His eldest son Brad is engaged to be married this June.

Becky and her husband, Harlie, live in Burnaby, B.C. Harlie is "Head of contract for the Dept. of Public Works of Canada" in their Vancouver office. They have one son Terry and a dog "Cissie" who is the daughter of the household.

Peter and his wife, Carol, live in Oliver, B.C. Peter works in the hospital there as a hospital administrator. They have two sons. Both boys are still in high school. They have a nice home with numerous fruit trees. Last year they had a swimming pool installed.



Winnifred and George Howes with granddaughter Deidre.

Barbara and her husband, Bob, live in Delta. They have a nice home, with a swimming pool and a large garden. Bob flies with Air Canada. They have two daughters. Diedrie, the eldest, is in her first year university and Sherry is in junior high.

Ruth is married to a sergeant in the R.C.M.P. They live in Hope. They have a new home there and have been busy landscaping. Al and Ruth have two children, a daughter Janice 13 and son Graham age nine.

This is the Howes family as it is today. They all went to school and had a happy childhood in Flying Shot. Many of the friends and families they knew have also left.

The children today are going to Grande Prairie schools by bus. The one room school house is no more. The little church is abandoned as people now have transportation to the services in the city. The little districts are slowly losing their identity. Maybe the book "Along the Wapiti" will be a means of keeping at least their memory alive.

The Adolph Hugel Family

Adolph Hugel was born in Geneva, Switzerland, and came out to Nebraska as a young man. He worked for several years, then decided to come west, and came to Oregon by covered wagon. There he met and married Clarah Ramsay, who with her family had come by covered wagon from Missouri.

Four children, Marie, Idella, Henry and Edward were born there.

Next move was to California, where another daughter, Elsie was born.

They had a neighbour, Mr. William Foore, who with his family, moved up to Grande Prairie, and settled in the Percy School District.

Letters came back telling of the opportunities, and of the land that could be homesteaded. So in the spring of 1921, we headed out for Grande Prairie, coming by boat to Vancouver, then by train, arriving here on May 28, and snow on the ground.

One month was spent at Mr. Foore's, while Dad went about getting a homestead, which was all bush land, and he had to clear a spot to set a tent. There he built a log house, with pole and sod roof. Some close neighbours came to lend a hand which was truly appreciated.

The first winter was hard, no one being used to the cold weather and snow. The four oldest children walked two and a half miles to the Flying Shot School, where Miss Marion Morrison was teaching.

Summers were spent clearing and breaking land. We used mules and horses in those days. Every summer Dad would take his outfit and build roads for the municipality, and worked on most of the roads in the south end of the district. He introduced the Fresno scraper to our area. Until this time the earth was moved with a slip scraper.

Winters, in the early years, Dad mined coal on Spring Creek. He was the first to open a mine on the Wapiti, south and west of Dimsdale. Farmers came for miles to haul their own coal. Dad spent some time prospecting, either by himself, or with Tom Russell who was a prospector and miner. They found numerous coal deposits. some too far away to market at that time.

Times were hard, but we raised a market garden and lots of potatoes, which we were always able to dispose of.

Wild fruit was plentiful, and we canned a lot for future use. Wild game was plentiful, and we also canned that, so there was always lots of food.

Sundays we spent going to church services at the school house, or visiting with neighbours and friends. About 1927 Dad took his outfit of mules and horses and moved a small Anglican Church from Bear Lake district, down to Flying Shot, where it still stands on the farm of Bud Rintoul. For years we had Sunday School at the school, every Friday afternoon, or we had Sunday School by post. It was always a big event to see the girls in the Sunday School Van.

Often times, many of the young people gathered at our place to play ball and often stayed for a meal. Our mother always found enough to go around.



Adolph and Clarah Hugel.

Every winter, Dad would take a load of wheat to the grist mill at Sexsmith, and return home with flour, enough to do until the next year.

In 1927, another daughter, Mabel, was born in the old log hospital at Grande Prairie.

Through the years more land was acquired and dad decided to raise sheep. At one time he had 600, but the wolves and coyotes got so bad, and so many sheep were lost that he had to sell them.

In 1955, they decided to retire, so sold the farm to E. Kyle, (who later sold it to R. Moffatt), and moved to Rutland, B.C. There, mother passed away in 1958 at 73 years of age. Dad lived to the age of 92, and passed away in 1974. Both are laid to rest in the Kelowna City Cemetery.

The Robert Kater Family

Robert Kater married Annie Card of London, England, in 1918. In January 1919 they came to Grande Prairie, a small town covered in deep snow which lasted till May. Bob had a homestead in the Flying Shot District about seven miles from Grande Prairie, which Annie thought was in the middle of nowhere. They were met and driven by cutter to a log cabin with only a dirt floor.

Bob Kater, a veteran of W.W.I, had been gassed, so spent the better part of five and a half years going back and forth to the University Hospital in Edmonton. During that time three children were born to them. Their closest neighbors were a Mr. and Mrs. Beckett. The latter was a woman with a heart of gold and a bit of a reputation.

When the Kater's second child was born, Mrs. Beckett delivered it. Mrs. Kater, alone except for a two year old daughter and a young niece - Nellie Childs, just six, who was fresh out from England - started out for the Becketts when she went into labor. After reaching a large mud puddle in a swamp, Mrs. Kater was unable to go any further. She sent Nellie with the young girl on to the dim light they could see in the distance for help. The children sent the Becketts back with a wagon and Mrs. Beckett delivered the Kater's only son. Nellie always though Bobby was born in the mud puddle!

The Becketts befriended the young English woman with the sick husband as she was often alone, and also her family, the Cards and Childs, who came the following year.

Later the Katers moved to Grande Prairie where Bob tried to operate a green house. However his lung condition forced him to take his wife and family to a warmer climate. They made their home in Victoria where he lived until 1943. He was predeceased by his son Bobby in 1942, who was killed serving with the R.C.A.F.

Mrs. Kater, two daughters and several grandchildren still reside in Victoria, B.C.

The George Laplante Family

George's grandfather came to Canada from France and took land near where the Parliament buildings are now in Edmonton. They couldn't get good water so moved to Alberta Beach where he took up a homestead and became the Hudson's Bay Company factor. George was born there along with three brothers and four sisters. George left home at 14 years and made his way north.

Victoria's parents, Adam and Veronique Calliou, came from Lac St. Anne, by way of Grouard, by pack train, to Flying Shot Lake in 1895. There were 18 families with 150



Victoria and George Plante in front of their home in Grande Prairie.

pack horses in the group. Adam had had a broken leg in Southern Alberta, from a fall off his horse in a gopher hole, resulting in one leg being shorter, giving him a limp.

There were no doctors so Mrs. Calliou went back to Grouard where Victoria was born in 1897, returning to Flying Shot later. Three boys were born and three girls: William, Gibney, Dave, Marceline, Victoria and Lillian.

The group was issued grants around the lake and trapped and hunted. When asked why they came, George said with a big smile, "for the grants, and to get away from the white man". They really opened the trail for the white man to follow them.

The women picked and dried wild berries for fruits. There were blueberries, strawberries, saskatoons, raspberries, pin cherries and cranberries.

The heating system was camp fires, and sod fireplaces with rods set in to hang cooking pots on. There were no roads and no schools.

Victoria worked for Frank Donald a few years. She married George in 1920. They lived with the Calliou's a few years.

George and Victoria have one daughter, Lena, born in 1923. When she was six months old, they brought her over the Edson Trail from Edmonton. It took 15 days. George would bring the baby over the rivers, hang her cradle in a tree and go back for Mrs. Laplante and pack horse. Lena is Mrs. Longson and has three boys and one girl.

In 1923 George and Victoria bought the present property in Grande Prairie, lived in a log house still on the corner of the property. He built the present house from lumber he got from Sedore at $10 per thousand. Mrs. Laplante made moosehide gloves, moccasins and coats to pay for lumber. George trapped for several years, and worked at various jobs. They will have their diamond anniversary in 1980.

By 1924 most of the settlers had sold their grants at Flying Shot Lake and moved away. They held dances in the log house bought by A. Smart on the John Owens property now owned by Don Partlow. Joker Sanderson called square dances, everyone enjoyed themselves. Like Pete Campbell once said, "Nobody got hurt, just two got killed".

The Linquist Story

Christopher Linquist and wife, Karen, and young daughter Ida, left Sweden in 1903 to immigrate to the United States. They first lived at Gardener, Massachusetts, for two years, then moved to Nanton, Alberta, and took a homestead near a town then called Brent (later changed to the name of Blackie). In 1910, Mr. Linquist and family went back to Montana, travelling in a Prairie Schooner to Chester.

In 1916 they moved by train this time to Little Bow River where they settled on Government land.

Five years later, their daughter, Ida, married Worth Wiest, who farmed with them for two years.

In 1925, Mr. and Mrs. Linquist moved to Legal, Alberta, where they rented land, moving to Westlock three years later.

Ida's husband passed away in 1929. Ida had one son by this marriage, Arthur Wiest, who is married and lives in Edmonton.

Mr. and Mrs. Linquist had heard from a friend Charlie Swanson, who lived in the Grande Prairie area, and they decided to move here in 1930. They bought the NE 2-71-6-W6. Mr. and Mrs. Linquist lived on this land till Mr. Linquist passed away in 1939.

Their daughter, Ida Wiest, had remained in Westlock where she ran a boarding house for seven years. She then worked on the C.N. railroad as a cook for seven years.

In that time she visited her parents frequently and once again cupid shot his little arrow, and Ida and Alva Yates were married in October of 1942.

Mrs. Linquist moved in with her daughter and lived with her until she passed away in July of 1958.

The Alex Luchak Family

Oleksa (Alex) Luchak came to Canada with his parents Wasyl and Anastasia Luchak, four brothers and three sisters in 1903 from a village in Europe, Ispas, Bukowina, and first settled in Sacred Heart, Alberta.

In 1905 Alex married Zenovia (Elizabeth) Huculak who came to Canada at age 17 in 1900 with her parents Mr. and Mrs. George Huculak from a village Borwich, Bukowina, in Austria. They lived with his parents and family until 1913 when they moved to Desjarlais, Alberta with four children, Helen born 1906, John born 1908, Mike 1910, and George 1912. The young couple toiled and opened land with horses and acquired some farm equipment. Meanwhile four more children were born to the couple, Jane 1914, Mary 1917, Peter 1920, and Violet 1923.



Mr. and Mrs. Alex Luchak and son Peter.

In April 1929, selling their land on payment, the call of the West brought them to the Flying Shot District. They bought a homestead from Joe Crummy and transported their farm equipment and some cattle by rail.

Six of the eight children came with them Mike, George, Jane, Mary, Peter and Violet. Helen and John remained in the Desjarlais District.

There was only fifty acres under cultivation and no buildings. They lived in a log house located on Kees Blom's land until they built a log house and barn on their own property. This was during the depression years and times were rough. The children had to help pick rocks and roots to prepare land for seeding. These days were sometimes long and tiresome.

The family home was heated by wood stoves and lit with kerosene lamps. Source of water was a dug well. Radios were operated on 12 volt batteries. The farming was done by horse-driven machinery. A garden was very important in providing vegetables for the long winter months. Picking wild berries to provide fruit and jam

seemed a little less tedious as Father Luchak usually kept the children amused by his many tales as they picked the fruit. The food basket which usually consisted of homemade bread, cabbage rolls, boiled eggs, etc; tasted so good eaten in the fresh air of the berry patch.

Harvesting was the most memorable time. The grain was cut by horse-driven binder and stooking done by hand. After the bundles were dry, groups of neighbors would get together and help each other with the threshing, doing one farm and moving on to the next. Bundles were hauled to the threshing machine by horse-drawn hay racks and manually fed into the threshing machine. The women were busy doing the cooking for the crew, hauling lunch out for the men, also giving the men a break by either shovelling grain in the granary or pitching bundles.

It was not all toil, the youngsters found time to entertain themselves, on an occasional Sunday, with games of ball or horseshoes. On Friday night the Flying Shot Community Hall was filled with young and old attending the dance. Entertainment was provided by whoever had an instrument they could play. George occasionally brought his violin to fiddle a square dance or polka.

Being Greek Orthodox, Christmas was celebrated on January 7 and the biggest thrill was Christmas Eve when they prepared a twelve course meal. Easter was highlighted by decorated chicken eggs which were symbols of the coming spring and prosperity for harvest.



Mike, George and Peter Luchak.

In 1947, because of ill health, Elizabeth Luchak returned to Desjarlais to live with her oldest son, John. She passed away in October 1947.

Alex continued to reside with his two sons, George and Mike. In 1958 Alex moved to Desjarlais. He passed away in March of 1963 and was laid to rest beside his wife in the Desjarlais cemetery.

George and Mike continued to reside on the farm until they sold out about 1968.

Their children:

Helen married Bill Shapka, farmed in the Desjarlais District, and their children are Nick, John, Alex, Pearl, George and Mary. Helen passed away December 1979. Bill passed away earlier (1977).

John married Anne Korluik, farmed in the Desjarlais District, passed away in 1964. Their children Nick, Marion, Alex, Cathy, Bill and Henry.

Mike and George, remained bachelors, are now in Willingdon, Alberta.

Jane married Peter Stemplowski in 1932, their children are Gregory, Annie and Mary.



Mrs. Luchak holding Greg Stemplowski, Helen, Mike, Mary and Jane.

Mary married John Dometraschuk, farmed in Andrew, then retired to Edmonton. John passed away in 1970. Mary is presently with her daughter, Florence, in Edmonton, Alberta. They had five children Florence, Alex, Janet, Donald and Carol. Donald married Marilyn Christopherson and has two children, David and Lisa and lives in Sexsmith, Alberta. Carol is living in Grande Prairie.

Peter married Anne Haydak, farmed in Desjarlais, is now living in Willingdon, Alberta, employed by the N.A.R. They have three girls, Delores married to Ken Moylan, Martha and Vivan (Zenovia) named after grandmother.

Violet married Jens Hornum who made a career of the army. They lived in North Delta, B.C., but are presently in Edmonton, Alberta. Their only daughter, Sharon was married and has two children, Donnie and Diane.

Mr. Robert Mitchell

Flying Shot news item October 15, 1942

"Flying Shot has again been visited by the hand of death. This time Mr. Robert Mitchell has passed from our midst. The late Mr. Mitchell was born January 21, 1860 at Landsdowne, Leeds County, Ontario. Brought up in Huron County, until the age of 22, he then moved with his family to Oak Lake, Manitoba. In 1909, he and a brother-in-law trekked the Long Trail to Grande Prairie and surrounding country, with the idea of making a home in Grande Prairie district. He returned to Manitoba and in 1916 Mr. Mitchell and his wife came to settle on a homestead in the Flying Shot settlement. His son William of the Millarston district came four years ahead. Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell have resided in Flying Shot ever since."

"Mr. Mitchell was loved and respected by all who knew him, both young and old alike. He was a devout Presbyterian and was always glad to see his minister pay him a visit. A keen lover of sport, he always entered into the spirit of the various activities at the local picnics. He



W.M.S. of Presbyterian Church L. to R.: Lily Tissington, unknown, Annie Cameron, Ethel Hodges, Winnifred Howes, Francis Walters, Rev. Fisher, Mrs. Wes Stephen, Mr. Thompson, Clarah Hugel, Margaret Cameron, Mrs. Fisher, Nellie Eskdale, Seated: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mitchell.

was a very good horseman, and enjoyed driving his horses almost to the last, taking great pleasure in driving to Dimsdale for the mail."

"Although in failing health the last three months, he was only confined to his bed 12 days. Mr. Mitchell always enjoyed his trip to Lake Saskatoon to join the old timers in their annual picnic, and was at their last picnic in July, 1942."

"He will be sadly missed by his loving wife, his son William and his wife, his daughters, Mrs. Beownell of Windsor, Ontario and Mrs. Wallace Chillderhose of Rosser, Manitoba. Fourteen grandchildren and one great grandchild also survive him."

Mrs. Mitchell remained on the farm for many years and was active in the W.M.S. of the Presbyterian Church. Her modest home was always immaculate, and visitors welcome. Her beautiful organ which accompanied the singing at W.M.S. meetings is now in the Pioneer Museum.

In later years Mrs. Mitchell moved to Ontario to be near her niece. She passed away in Ontario and was buried in the Grande Prairie cemetery beside her husband.

The Olaf Nerstad Family

by Bessie Lindsay

In the spring of 1920 I came with my folks, Martha and Olaf Nerstad, and sister Dorothy, to Grande Prairie by train from Galahad, Alberta. We shipped our household effects, stock and equipment. The move probably took us three or four days.

My folks rented the Ralph Brown quarter, three miles west of town. It was a lovely new country and we liked it there. Grande Prairie was a nice size town. There were two stores, hardware, two hotels, schools, churches, hospital with two doctors, (L.J. O'Brien and A.M. Carlisle), post office, court house, two livery stables and a creamery. The railway ended there when we arrived and when we returned from LaGlace it was being extended to Hythe going through a corner of the land we rented. I often think I would like to live there again. My folks decided to buy Harry Nydorf's quarter at LaGlace in 1942. I had attended Percy School for a short time while at Grande Prairie.

Violet Larson and Ingeborg Friburg called each day on their way by and took me to school on horseback. Mr. E.J. Keith was our teacher and he taught public and high school students at LaGlace. My brother Herbert was born here in 1923.

In 1924 we moved partly by sleigh and partly by wagon back to Grande Prairie. I herded cattle on horseback. Boy, was I tired! I must have stood up for a week! This time we lived one mile south of Ralph Brown's quarter.

Dorothy and I attended Flying Shot School. We walked or rode horseback. We enjoyed going to school there. I stayed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hugel occasionally and Elsie Jebb (Hugel) and I are still good friends. I rode to town to attend Sunday school and also took it by post.



Ben, Dorothy, Bob, Bessie, Christina and Helen Nerstad.

My folks rented land about eight miles northeast of Grande Prairie. This land belonged to George Ritchie. Dorothy and I attended Crystal Creek School, and in 1930 I married George Ritchie. We moved to a homestead south of Crystal Creek School. There were six children born to us: Billy, Helen, Bob, Dorothy, Christina and Benny. Billy passed away in 1941 and was laid to rest in the Glen Leslie Cemetery. Bob married Ruth Schmidt and lives in Brooks, Alberta. Helen married Len Scorgie and lives at Hinton Trail. Dorothy married Marshall Semenchuk and lives at Vermilion. Christina married James Novak and lives in Edmonton. Benny married and lives in Edmonton. There are eleven grandchildren living and one deceased. I also have one great granddaughter.

George died in 1964 and was buried beside his son in Glen Leslie Cemetery. I married Norman Lindsay, an old time resident of Roblin, Manitoba, and we live in Edmonton. My sister Dorothy married Gordon Edey of Heart Valley and they have a family of two. My brother never married.

The Philip Nilsson Family

by Philip Nilsson

My brother and I went into business in the Buck Lake district west of Wetaskiwin, Alberta, where I met my wife Irene. We purchased from Mr. George Cissell Sr., our employer before the war, his sawmill and logging equipment and operated it the summer of 1947 in this area of Alberta. Our original home was in the Battle Lake area, where our parents lived at that time.

Being young, we looked for an area with more timber in it to make our future business successful. Two places were open to us, Edson and Grande Prairie. After seeing Grande Prairie and its potential, we had no difficulty in choosing. In the fall of 1947 we shipped our equipment by railroad, loaded up our truck with supplies and camp

equipment, our car with employees, and drove for two days arriving 43 miles south of Grande Prairie at the Big Mountain Timber Berth. Here we set up our first sawmill and logged and sawed lumber for the Grande Prairie Lumber Co. Ltd.

Grande Prairie had a population of about 2,600 at the time, few cement sidewalks and no paved streets. Our first home in the Grande Prairie area was a tar paper shack at the mill site. In the spring of 1948 we purchased a three room house in the west end of town. There were four other houses west of Bear Creek at that time.

During the first four summers we moved our sawmill to the Crooked Creek area where summer logging was possible. We also did some road work with our mobile equipment. Since our mill was providing winter work only, after the first four years we decided to buy a farm to employ us in the summer. Our first piece of land was in the Flying Shot Lake area. Our parents, Mr. and Mrs. H.F. Nilsson made their home from 1952 to about 1974 on this land, gardening and raising chickens successfully.

In 1963 we built a home on the farm and moved out from Grande Prairie. Our family consisted of foster sons, Carl and Douglas Bjur, and five of our own children, Brian, Marilyn, Leta, Kurt and Fay. They have all received their education at the city and county schools of Grande Prairie with the exception of Brian and Marilyn, who received their high school and college at Concordia College, Edmonton. Carl also attended S.A.I.T. at Calgary for one year.

Four of our children are married and have blessed us with ten grandchildren. One of the grandchildren lost her life in a tragic accident at the age of three years. The remaining nine keep us thinking young and being very happy. Two of our children live in the Edmonton area, one in Delta, B.C. and the other four are still in the Grande Prairie area.

In reminiscing, we think of how this area has grown in all aspects of growth. We truly are a fortunate people to have so much of the good things of life in this part of Alberta. For the many opportunities, for the successes, for the fine neighbors of the Flying Shot Lake district, we can only say, "Thank you". Also, "Thanks, Lord!"

The Peter Ostby Family

by Mrs. Irene Ross (nee Ostby)

With regard to the folks' journey into the promised land, I can't give you exact dates as no one kept a diary. Over the years I've heard the story many times of the incidents along the way.

It would be 1913 when the news of the Peace River country spread around Calgary. The building boom had slowed down and a new adventure appealed to my folks. The northland held no fear for them as they were from the north, Mom coming from a dairy farm in Balings, northern Sweden and Dad from Sorumsand, Norway. I would think by mid April 1914 they made their way to Edmonton. Here they bought all the equipment for the long trek along the Edson Trail. They travelled in company with others. The road was wet and muskeg in places, so the men went ahead to fill the soft spots with corduroy, made from any available trees along the way. Mom drove our wagon as she was the lightest on the load.

When they came to the rivers, here again the men waded to make sure it was safe for the wagon to cross. Meat and fish were hunted and caught along the way. While the horses rested and pastured, the men provided food. Fish seemed plentiful as it was no problem to catch fresh fish for breakfast. The stopping places were usually a day's drive apart and here they met others either coming or going and an exchange of news was always welcome along the way. It was at Lake St. Anne that mother saw a group of people picking, cooking and eating stinging nettles. Fresh greens looked good to her so she began to pick too. Never had she encountered nettles before and she thought "those poor people must be starving. If those things can hurt my hands, what on EARTH WILL THEY DO TO YOUR STOMACH?" Any time I've cut and prepared nettles she always tells me the story.

It would be mid July when they reached the Peace River country. Looking at the various available locations took time and they finally filed on the homestead on NE 34-70-6-W6. They quickly cut slough grass and made hay for the animals, made a log cabin for themselves and prepared for the winter. Dad told the story of when the supplies were bought for the winter he had a total of four cents left in his pocket. He soon found work on the Grande Prairie hospital, Bank, and other projects. Hunting and trapping was also a way of supplementing supplies so he found a very good hunter and trapper friend Narcy Belcourt. They hunted the Wapiti and Smoky country and the hunting stories I heard were far better than any T.V. In my imagination I could see those moose and grizzly bear.

Lumber was very hard to come by and several people along with my father pooled their equipment and got a small saw mill going, I would think somewhere along a river bank. People were so eager for building material that even slabs were taken and used. Money was the one thing that was in short supply and often a load of lumber for a pig or cow was the exchange they used.



Mr. and Mrs. Pete Ostby and daughter, Irene—taken about 1923.

Mom struggled with a garden. The growth was terrific but occasionally a summer frost would kill her potatoes and that was a disaster as that was a staple they depended on. She often told of times she and Mrs. Taylor would go horse back riding to pick blueberries and cranberries, or the lonely nights when the men were away hunting and the only sound you would hear was the howling coyotes. No communication those days, but somehow life was not boring as there was so much to do one was far too busy to feel sorry for oneself.

Years slipped by and Grande Prairie grew. In 1918 I (Irene) was born, January 18, in the tiny hospital. It was so cold inside the hospital that the water froze solid in a glass on a bedside table.

Soon the flu epidemic spread to Grande Prairie and families and neighbors died by the score. Dad made boxes and helped bury the dead. People that were well a few days before were suddenly sick and dying. Tragic, was the only description.

The pioneers were a mixture of people from every walk of life, each contributing to the variety. It was there my folks learned the art of making alcohol, tanning leather, running a trap line, and countless tasks that people do to survive on their own initiative. Such names as Judd Owen, John Parent, Ivor Larsen, Tom Brady, Rob Henderson, Charles Taylor, Watts, Marietta Taylor, Dr. Little, Narcy Belcourt are all familiar names. They must have been neighbors in the area. Time went by and the homestead grew to have barns, cattle, grain and a beaten road past the place.

It must have been during the harvesting of 1920 that an early snow slowed the threshing to a halt. It was Rob Henderson who suggested to my Dad that they take a trip to Victoria on Vancouver Island to see some friends of his. When they arrived on the coast Victoria was enjoying summer weather - fruit on the trees, people in shirt sleeves and no sign of winter. That was the turning point in their lives. They both decided to leave the Prairie for the coast and they moved to Vancouver Island and here we have lived ever since.

No doubt I cut my teeth on moose meat and still cherish a few faint memories of those long gone days. For my folks it was an adventure that gave them a feeling of achievement. They relived those years in memories the rest of their lives. There was never a sour note regarding their stay in Grande Prairie. It was always a very colorful chapter that was often and delightfully told. My kids would sit on my Dad's knee and listen to the hunting stories of the foothills and when one adventure was over they would beg for more: "Story gen", Steve would say.

The Donald Partlow Family

Don was born in Grande Prairie. When he was one year old, the family moved to the farm at Flying Shot Lake. He attended elementary school at Flying Shot School, high school in Grande Prairie and then went to Calgary Tech. He farmed with his Dad (Albert) until 1962 when he acquired the Stubb's farm.

Don married Phyllis Stewart, daughter of Olive and Morris Stewart of Bezanson. They now own seven quarters in a block, have built a new home and are raising their four children, two of each; Eric, Afton, Erin and Ron.

When Don was a boy the young folk of the Community made their own recreations, baseball, skating and skiing. The boys cleaned rinks on the lake with horses and slips.



Eric, Phyllis, Don holding Ron, Erin and Afton.

Now the children are bussed from the door to Grande Prairie schools, their interests and amusements are all there, too. The local efforts for fun and frolic are sadly missed. Summer Sundays found the young folk gathered in Tissington and Partlows pastures playing ball; more home frozen ice cream was consumed than one can imagine. There were always willing hands to turn the handle.

Don now has Albert's farm with his own, lots of acres but he will get it done.

The Joseph Partlow Family

Joseph (Joe) Partlow came to Canada from Codner, Derbyshire, England in 1910 with a brother-in-law. They came directly to Grande Prairie over the Edson Trail. Joe homesteaded near Drystick Lake northwest of Grande Prairie. The land is now owned by a grandson, Jack Partlow. Mrs. Alice Partlow (nee Tissington) and six children came over with relatives in 1912 on the next boat after the Titanic. The families stopped at Clover Bar, east of Edmonton for two years. Joe worked at coal mines, Fulton Mines, in winter, returning to Grande Prairie to



Alice and Joseph Partlow, Annie (Partlow) Oliver, Jimmie Oliver, Harold, Albert, Horace and Eric Partlow.

resume homestead duties each spring. Because he told them he hadn't slept on the land, but over the fence at the neighbor's house, he had to put in one year more to get title.

The family came north on the first passenger train over the new railroad in 1916. It took three days. They all lived with relatives until a log house was built for them. Joe joined the army in 1916 and was overseas until the war ended in 1918. He was injured in barbwire entanglement while in France.

There were two girls and four boys in the family:
Annie (Mrs. J.B. Oliver) (deceased 1979)
Florance (Mrs. Jim Crerar)
Albert (deceased 1978)
Harold (deceased 1963)
Horace (deceased 1966)
Eric (deceased 1959)

There are 20 grandchildren and numerous greatgrands. Joe passed away in 1945, his wife Alice had predeceased him in 1929.



Albert Partlow breaking on J.B. Oliver farm in 1929—four bottom plow with 12 head of horses.

Albert, the oldest boy did the first plowing with a team of horses and a walking plow. He was 12 years old. Mrs. Partlow would take him egg nogs to the field, "to keep up his strength", she said. The family acquired a team of horses and a few cows. Alice made butter, hauled it to town on Saturdays in a lumber wagon to trade for groceries. She was a good butter maker so she had many special customers. The years were lean and hard on all settling in our "Mighty Peace Country", but everyone helped their neighbors making our country what it is today.

Albert went out on his own at 21 years, working in lumber mills and hauling wood and coal to town. Winters he drove his brother-in-law, J.B. Oliver, the undertaker, with horses and sleighs. He rented the Oliver farm at Flying Shot Lake, breaking 160 acres with 12 horses on a tractor breaking plow.

In 1928 he married Helen Powell who had come with her mother and father (Bert Powell) from southern Alberta, originally from Bend, Oregon where Bert had ranched and rode rodeo circuits roping and riding.

Albert and Helen farmed the Oliver farm for three years, then moved to Grande Prairie where they had wood, coal and dray business for seven years. Albert also put up tons and tons of ice for businesses and City before electricity.

Both Helen and Albert missed the rural life so they decided to move out. They bought a quarter section from Dick Eskdale, drilled a well, put up a house and barn. Albert traded in horses and cattle and kept a lot of pigs.



Helen and Albert Partlow.



Albert Partlow, Lorraine (Partlow) Church and Don Partlow. Front: Joyce (Partlow) Busick and Helen Partlow.

He farmed with horses for a number of years. He bought a half section of land from Dan Owens. He kept a good herd of cattle until his health began to fail. He carried on farming, with his son Don's help, until 1974 when he was forced to give it up. They moved to Grande Prairie where he remained until passing away in the spring of 1978.

There were four children:
Loraine (Mrs. Stu Church) Lacombe
Joyce (Mrs. Byron Busick) Puyallup, Wash.
Donald (Phyllis Stewart) Bezanson
Ronald (deceased at 5 months)

There are fourteen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. Helen remains in Grande Prairie. Don has the home farm.

The John and Anne Popowich Story

In November, 1948, John and I, his wife, Anne, moved from Radway, Alberta to Flying Shot district. We not only brought with us our two children, Linda, four years old and Ken two weeks old, but John's Mom and Dad Dutchak (stepfather), also my Dad and Mom (Andy and Susan Kapusta) and sister Lilian - nine years old.

We bought land from Dan Owens, who with his two daughters, Donna and Enid, lived in town at the time. Because he stored grain in the farm house, we couldn't move in right away. We all lived in the big house on the farm of Perley Pollack, which was purchased by my Dad, Andy.

The first Christmas in our new home was a bit lonely, but we made new friends quickly; Mr. and Mrs. Walter Konevecki dropped in. Also Mr. Harold Oxley and Frank Rothwell, the Realtor through whom we got the farms. Mr. Rothwell turned out to be a good friend and visited with us quite often.

Shortly after Christmas, John went to a sale at Tony Linden's and bought three milk cows, then to Inman's Hog ranch, to get some brood sows and we were back in farming business (Inman's ranch was where Housworths live now).

Since we still had lots of trees and bush on our place and were opening new land for cultivation, we cut and sawed fire wood and sold it in town, as there was no natural gas as yet. We always had a big vegetable garden, sold bags of potatoes, cabbage, turnips, beets and more. Also sold gallons of fresh farm cream, cottage cheese, supplied many town families with poultry for deep freezes. At this time we knew Grande Prairie from one end to another and across, and made scores of friends.

In 1950, just a few days before Linda started school at Flying Shot, she had an unfortunate accident in which her feet were cut when she stepped in front of the binder, drawn by horses. Except for the scars on her feet you can't tell now, as her walking was not impaired, thanks to Doctor Carlisle, who did a wonderful job sewing the tendons together. When Linda was in grade four, Ken started. He was the only child to start grade one that fall, with Mrs. Helen Tissington as the teacher.



Linda, Annie, Evelyn, Ken and John Popowich.

When Evelyn was born in November, 1950 it was 46 below. She was one of many farm children that started grade one in the brand new Harry Balfour County school in town.

My parents (Andy and Susan Kapusta) lived on Richmond Hill for two years then sold out to the Horton family and bought a farm from Bill Hilosky, just east of town.

Those were really the best years of our lives. We enjoyed summers driving in the country, checking crops, to Sturgeon Lake fishing and best of all picking berries. We drove 60 to 70 miles south into the bush for blueberries, high and low cranberries, gooseberries, currants. It was one fall, while big game hunting, John found out that huckleberries were edible fruit. Many seasons after, we and our neighbors would drive way into jackpines to pick these delicious berries. John always had to stop by the river, either Kakwa, Cutbank or Bald Mountain Creek, to try his luck at fishing. On rare occasions he would catch a grayling or two, which made his day. Then we'd hurry home to milk our herd of Holsteins and do the rest of the chores.

Lil married Ron Grubert and has four lovely daughters, Lydia, Judy, Rosa and Melody.

In 1965 my Dad, Andy, passed away and Mom sold out, and moved into Grande Prairie where she's still living.

John's folks lived with us for 12 years, then in 1960 moved into a little house in Grande Prairie. In 1970 their daughter took them to Edmonton, where they lived three more years. Grandma Dutchak was 87 years at the time of her passing and Grandpa Dutchak lived to be 91 years young.

Linda married Fred Landry. They have three boys: Darcy, Kelsy and Kevin. They are now divorced and she lives in Sherwood Park.

Ken married Irene Duncan, a Sexsmith girl, and they have three girls: Angela, Lori and Jennifer.

Evelyn is married to Myles Wolchyn, and they are on the farm northwest of Sexsmith. They have two boys and one girl: Cory, Chris and Carri Ann.

It's going to be eight years on November 25, 1980 since John is gone. I live in Grande Prairie now, close to my mother. Ken took over farming the home place.

The Andrew Ross Story

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Ross came from Scotland in 1926. They lived for the first year in Chipman, Alberta,



Mr. and Mrs. Ross, Hunter, Andy and Mary.

and came up to the Peace country in 1927, settling in the Flying Shot district. They brought their three children with them, Andrew - eight, Hunter - six, and Mary - four. They farmed in Flying Shot till they retired and moved to Grande Prairie in 1951.

Andrew married Vic Elford's daughter, Verna.

Hunter married overseas during the war and his wife, Vera, and daughter, Lynne, came out to Canada in 1946.

Mary married Bill George.

The Hunter Ross Story

I was born in Scotland and came to Canada in 1926. I lived for one year in Chipman, Alberta, before coming to Flying Shot in 1927. It was here I had my schooling. On leaving school I went to work for Jack Holtom, Arnold Christie and others. Joined the Army in 1941, coming back to Canada in 1945. I married while overseas in England and my wife, Vera, and daughter, Lynne, followed in 1946.



Hunter, Lynn, Lorrain, Vera and Maurice Ross.

We lived for awhile on the Poppin place, then moved to Grande Prairie for awhile. By this time Dad's health wasn't so good, so Bud Luckey and Bill Head slid a house for us from town to the farm. I farmed in the summer and hauled fire wood to town, then in the winter went to the Lumber Mills.

One year stands out. We went to George Stevens Mill at Big Mountain. Tom, Betty Eskdale and two children, Vera, and I and two children all lived in one shack. Those were the days! We hauled a barrel of water each Sunday, topping it up with snow the rest of the week. The floor boards weren't too close together, keeping the house on the cool side. The result was when the children dropped the cutlery it disappeared. When there wasn't enough to go around, up came the floor boards.

For three winters we went to Ralph Norton's Mill at Crooked Creek, where I decked logs, driving my team there from Grande Prairie. Lynne, our oldest girl went to Moon's Mill School, riding horseback through the bush with Ellen Lewis (Norton).

We bought the home farm in 1955 and I also started work with North Canadian Forest Industries that year and am still with them. In 1965 we built a new house on the site of the old one and have lived here since.

Our eldest daughter, Lynne, married Lyle Girvan and they have three children. They live in Vancouver at present. Lyle works with B.C. Hydro, so gets moved around.

Lorraine married Ken Rinke and they have three children. Ken works for North Canadian Forest Industries. They live in Grande Prairie.

Maurice lives in Grande Prairie and is kept busy trucking.

The Salmond Family

by Laura Partlow

William C. Salmond, (my grandfather) born in 1855 in Bathgate, Scotland, came to Canada in 1865 with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Salmond (nee Isabella Gold). They landed in New York and made their way to Lenark, Ontario. George died there and his wife moved to Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, where the two sisters lived. Their ancestors still live around there.

W. C. Salmond married Mary Agnes McCausland July 26, 1879. She was born at Amherst Island, December 26, 1859, of Irish parents, Mr. and Mrs. John McCausland (nee Mary McFarron). William and Mary made their home at Myers Cove, Ontario, near Belville. Six children were born to this union. Three of them, William (Billy), Edmond, and Mrs. George Head (Isabella), migrated to Grande Prairie.

Billy left home at the age of 16 in 1905. He went to Cobalt, Ontario, and worked as a cook at the Silver Mine. From there, he came west and never returned. In Edmonton, he met up with a survey crew coming to Grande Prairie. Billy was the cook - he loved to cook and could cook as well as any woman.

Arriving in Grande Prairie in 1910, he filed on the SE 35-71-6-W6. Today, the Silver Crest Motel, Prairie Haven, Trumpeter Motor Inn and MacDonald's Restaurant stand on his building site. Later, he bought land on the Wapiti Road. Bill Head now lives on that land.

Billy bought the George Breeden Hotel which was the first stopping place in Grande Prairie and was only a one room log shack with a sod roof. This was a very hospitable place - weary travellers would come in at all hours and roll out a bed roll wherever they could find a corner; under the table, even on the table. The Salmond Hotel was built of lumber in 1912 on the corner of Richmond Avenue and 101st Street. This hotel burned in 1919. Lilge Hardware stands there now.

Ed Salmond arrived in 1912. Ed and Forest Falk and Mr. Falk Sr. drove teams of horses on sleighs to Edson to meet Mr. and Mrs. Wm. C. Salmond Sr. in February 1913. Grandpa Salmond had brought with them ten head of cattle and a line of machinery besides other supplies. Mrs. Jim Sedore came along from Ontario with them, Jim having come before.

I can remember Grandma Salmond talking of all the hardships on the Trail. She walked up and down all the hills to save the horses but Mrs. Sedore was too much of a lady to walk.

W. C. Salmond Sr. filed on Lot 15-71-6-W6, Settlement of Flying Shot Lake. He built a neat little log house. It was white washed inside and out. It sat in the trees and he had a love for flowers and gardening. Billy must have

inherited his mother's and father's love of flowers and gardening. Billy always had a beautiful garden of vegetables, fruit, and flowers. Adrian and Audrey Trepanier live on Grandpa's place now. Grandma Salmond stayed mostly with Billy, taking care of him. Grandma was a good friend of Mrs. Clifford and she often spoke of Hilda, the first white child born here. Dr. and Mrs. Alexander Forbes were great friends of Grandma's and she attended McQueen Presbyterian Church. Another friend I remember of Grandma's was Mrs. Sam Dunlop. Mr. Dunlop was under suspicion and questioned regarding the murder of the four trappers and the two Snyder's. He left Grande Prairie and Mrs. Dunlop claimed she didn't know where he was, but she left shortly after.

Grandpa Salmond went back to Myers Cove, Ontario. He took sick and passed away at the age of 72, April 24, 1927.

Grandma continued on here with Billy till 1936, when she returned to Ontario. In 1942, at her request, mother (Mrs. George Head) went east and brought her home and she passed away March 19, 1942 at the age of 84 years.

The Hugh Sinclair Story

by Mary Sinclair

Hugh Sinclair, being of the adventurous type, made his first trip to Canada in 1911. He worked for a time at Indian Head, Saskatchewan. He then decided to go to Philadelphia and visit his brothers who had immigrated earlier to the United States.

He returned to Britain, marrying Mary McKay in 1913. He worked for a time in a foundry at Whiteinch, Glasgow. He then decided he would make more money loading deep sea vessels. He worked at this until he started his own coal business. This was started by loaning a friend money to buy a horse and lorry to sell coal on the streets of Glasgow. The friend was unsuccessful and turned the lorry over to Hugh for the debt owing. Hugh hired a man to run the lorry. This was a start of a very successful business. He built it up to five lorries becoming the largest coal merchant in Glasgow.

The 1925-26 coal strike hurt the business badly.

The next thought was to join his brothers in the United States: they were in the building business. The waiting period was three years. At this time the papers were advertising the Soldier Settlement Scheme. He then made inquiries into this and was accepted on the basis of his experience at the Experimental Farm in Indian Head, Saskatchewan.

On June 10, 1927 we left Glasgow, Scotland, with our family Bill, John, Maisie and Dick, sailing down the Clyde on the ship called Militia. We docked June 16 at Halifax. We journeyed by train to Grande Prairie, staying at the Immigration Hall with another family for a few days.

Purchasing our supplies and hiring a dray, we were on our way to our half section of land, part of section 34-70-6-W6 of the Flying Shot district.

Arriving at our new home which had the necessities of a stove, beds, and table, we started a new way of life. I recall mosquitoes and flies were in the million. Never having to cope with these conditions it was grim but exciting.

Our first concern was to purchase a cow and horses. Luckily for us our cow had a calf that summer. Our horses purchased from Ed Gulley of the Bear Lake district were named "Darby and Joe". They turned out



Mary, Hugh, Dick and Maisie Sinclair.

to be our life line during the depression. They hauled wood and coal to Grande Prairie in the winter and worked the farm in the summer.

The farm already had fourteen acres broken. With Bill, John and hired help more land was cleared.

Hugh worked that fall on the threshing machine owned by Bill Luckey. In the winter we hauled logs to Grande Prairie and sold them for five dollars a load.

In the spring our first crop of oats and number one Garnet Wheat was planted. It sold that fall for seed at $1.25 a bushel.

The years were good and by this time the family had increased by Tom, Dan, and Gordon.



Gordon, Tom, Dan, Maisie and John Sinclair.

Hugh served in European Campaign and Italian Campaign. The land was rented for a time and farmed by Tom during his absence.

Sorrow struck our lives when Dick was killed in an accident in February of 1940.

Many changes have taken place. Hugh died in 1959 and our son Bill died in 1971. He had two sons, Bill Jr. and Hugh of Vancouver, B.C.

John and his wife, Donna, live in Edmonton. They have two children, Rand and Donna-Lee.

Maisie and Odeon live in Grande Prairie. They have three children. Judy (Mrs. Ron Fraser), Glen and Arlene at home.

Tom and Betty live on the original land cleared by Hugh. They have three children, Laurie Lee, Paddi-Anne, and Hugh.

Dan and Rose live on a piece of the original land purchased from Tom. They have two children, Gary and Christine.

Gordon and Karol live on the home place also. They have two children, Joan (Mrs. Gerald McDonald) and Linda, who is still at home.

I retired from the farm of 1974. I reside in Heritage Lodge, Grande Prairie, enjoy good health and celebrated my eighty-seventh birthday on January 25, 1980.

The Archie Smart Family

by Betty Welter

My sister Barbara and I arrived with our parents, Archie and Mabel Smart, from the Brooks area of southern Alberta in September 1928. Dad landed at Dimsdale with a railroad car of settlers effects - all our worldly possessions. Included were four horses, two cows, one dog, one cat, one kitten, machinery and household goods. We came on the passenger train - about a 28 hour journey then. Dad was a week on the way as the box car was put on the siding every so often so the stock could be watered.

Our first home was an old log house on the north end of Flying Shot lake, built before the railroad as the fence jutted out around one corner. Dad moved another log house from the old Clifford place to our new site on the J. Owens place, just north of Flying Shot school, Bill Luckey, Tom Waterman and members of the Jim Tissington family assisting. We were all moved in before snowfall, had a housewarming party and met all the neighbors - such excitement!



Archie and Mabel Smart, Barbara and Betty taken in Calgary - Xmas 1925 or 26.

Barbara and I started school in October, I in grade two and she a "beginner". Ruth Grimmett was our teacher. We were soon accepted and referred to as the "new kids" for the winter. It seemed no time at all until we were practising for the Christmas concert. I'll always remember our first concert - somehow that old schoolroom was transformed into a magical place. We had a stage complete with curtains that pulled (our sheets and blankets no less), Christmas tree, gifts, etc. The old school house was packed to the doors and everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy our program. We were so "keyed up" that we had more than butterflies in our stomachs that night.

The following September, Ruth Grimmett came to board with us as we were so close to the school. She used to ride horseback from the Tom Chapman farm - where Gordon Fried lives now, a long way in bad weather.

Late in the fall, one very chilly morning, we had a "sun worshipper" at our school. Dad was ploughing by the schoolyard and spied this naked man dancing round the flag pole, saluting the sun, it seemed. He paid no attention to Dad at all and didn't seem to understand English. Dad came back to our house and we stopped all the children from our way, and Tissingtons did the same, while the R.C.M.P. were called. This chap was taken away and we never heard any more details. School was badly interrupted that day and every student had their own version of what he was doing, what might have happened, etc. Ruth was married at Christmas time to Glen Conley and we were all so sorry to lose our dear teacher - we adored her!

Delpha Barrett replaced her and also boarded with us. The teacherage was built that fall, 1930 on the school grounds - thus ending boarding the teacher.

My brother, Charles, arrived in October 1930 - we thought he would never get here as Mother was in hospital seven weeks I think. That was also the worst fall in memory - a lot of snow in early September; stooks drifted in level with snow and wheat prices falling every day. Mother came home from hospital on October 17 in the cutter. The wind turned west the following week, snow melted and things dried up. Dad and Si McAusland started threshing around October 30th and had about a three week run - all dry. He plowed into December, in fact we had very little snow the rest of the winter.

The depression had hit in earnest - no sale or price for grain or stock. Everyone very discouraged and so many unemployed. The trains were full of young men "riding the rods" and looking for work. We had dozens stop in, asking for a meal and offering to do almost anything for one. Many of these lads had good educations, some with university degrees, too. Mom and Dad felt so sorry for them and dear knows how many meals and lunches we gave away, as did dozens of other farmers who lived on a highway or railroad track.

Again our dear teacher left us that summer to become Mrs. Edgar Bean. She was replaced by Mr. Foy - our first man teacher; we were just a bit apprehensive, believe me. However we were soon at ease and settled down once more. I'm sure we thought the annual visit by the school inspector, which we loathed, would be a daily worry with a man teacher. Mrs. Foy played the organ for us and how

we looked forward to her visits on Friday afternoon for a "sing-song last period". Mr. Foy had an old "Star" touring car with curtains on it and we thought it so neat. We had exchange basketball games with Percy and Five Mile Creek schools. Mr. Foy would pile the entire team in the old "Star" and off we would go, again during the last period on Friday. Mr. Cavett was teacher at Percy and he would bring his team over the following week. Can't remember the teacher at Five Mile.

Prices went from bad to worse and Dad couldn't meet his crop payments on his six quarters of land and we lost it all. He had worked like a dog for three years, brushing, breaking, planting trees, flowers and fruit trees around the yard. We moved again to a small lake lot, 93 acres on the south end of Flying Shot Lake. There wasn't a house, barn, fence nor an acre broken, but Dad had the courage to start over again. He bought another old log house, also from the Clifford settlement, tore it down and rebuilt it for our home. This was the first R.C.M.P. barracks, we were told and it had quite an historic background. He built a log barn, corral, etc. so we were all settled just before the snowfall once more.

Barbara and I really noticed the extra distance to school and did we get cold! The snow was so deep - no snowplows then and no school buses - we waded through it and shivered. We didn't have skidoo suits, down jackets and snow boots, etc. that today's children do - in fact I still marvel as to why some of us didn't freeze to death. Dad always maintained that we were warmer walking than riding. Quite a few students rode horseback - some double. Can remember literally helping to "pick" Jean Eskdale and Maizie Sinclair off their brother's horses, they were so cold that they could hardly stand up at times. Yes, those were the days!

We were all saddened that winter as Mr. Foy died suddenly December 17, 1932. Helen Foy was our new teacher in January. Things went along quite smoothly as I recall, winters long and cold, and lots of snow. However we wouldn't miss school for anything and our attendance was good - possibly better than today.

We used to make cocoa for noon hour on the heater during the winter months. A chart was posted every week so everyone had a turn. Students would carry milk in syrup pails - did that every get heavy too along with your lunch pail and any homework we had. Can still hear the loud "bang" from those goodly pails when the lid wasn't loosened enough while on the stove, plus the dreadful smell of scorching milk.

Another chart on the blackboard with two names per day listed the water boys. They had to walk to Tissington's well and carry a pail of water back somehow. Needless to say, it was seldom full when they arrived back at school - about a quarter mile. This was our total water supply for drinking and washing for 25 or so students for the day. This chore took the entire recess - hence no ball game, snowball fight or whatever for the water carriers. Funny how we didn't die a hundred times from any number of different germs with our outdoor privies and all - we must have been a hardy lot.

Another highlight of our lives was the school fair, usually held the second week in September in Grande Prairie. Garden seeds were distributed in the spring and how we watched and tended those precious vegetables. We worked for weeks on sewing and knitting projects, pressed leaves and weed collections, canning, baking and so on. Penmanship, art and maps were done in school; oh, how careful we were, too.

Usually we had a two or three day rain just previous to the fair and the roads were almost non-existent. Can well remember Dad loading up the wagon with all our entries - sometimes in the rain, and proceeding the five miles to town. There were dozens of other dads from several districts doing the same thing. Oh, the excitement of meeting students and teachers from the schools all around Grande Prairie, placing our entries and hoping! We would go back the next day to see how many prizes we had won and bring everything home again. The fair was held in the old Grande Prairie Theatre (about where the Park Hotel stands today) and was often ankle deep in mud. 1st prize was 40¢, 2nd 30¢ in most classes - this was quite a goldmine then, believe me. Our prize money bought our winter clothes for several years.

The Lenny family used to move into a wee house about October, on the Jack Patterson place by the lake, for the muskrat season. Several children attended our school for a few months and would take orders for moccasins from us. Price increased 10¢ for a half inch in length, 25¢ extra for a bead trim. Nearly everyone of us wore moccasins. Can still remember - the smell of wet moosehide and woollen socks and mitts - seemed part of our one room school.

Barbara and I wrote our Grade eight exams at Flying Shot - then departmental of course. Each exam in its own sealed envelope, opened at the exact time, our paper collected and sealed also at a stated time. Can well remember saying goodbye to Miss Foy and crying as we walked home in the mud after our last exam. This appeared to be the end of our schooling as grade nine wasn't taught here and we couldn't afford to board in town to attend high school.

Stayed home that year and helped on the farm. I was usually "Dad's hired man" and worked outside more than in. We farmed with horses, of course, so never lacked something to do. In the wintertime we got our fire wood, building logs, fence posts, rails, etc. from the "bush" - then just south of where Finch's are now, and along the riverbank on this side. Lots of good timber growing there then. We cut our own stove wood with a cross cut saw and spent hours at that. No wonder I have arthritis in my right shoulder today.

That winter Mrs. Howes had scarlet fever and was in the little isolation building at the Grande Prairie hospital for two months. I looked after the six little Howes, walking back and forth every day - left home about 7:30 a.m. and returning around 10 p.m. - six days a week. My wages were $12.50 a month and I thought I was wealthy, was 14½ at the time and wonder now how I ever managed.

The following year Barbara and I started grade nine by correspondence courses from the Western Canada Institute in Calgary. Inspector Balfour got us interested and enrolled about October. Lessons were mailed back and forth, we had two mails a week by train in this area at that time. It was a tremendous amount of work but we successfully completed grades nine and ten. Had started grade 11 when my mother died from a heart attack in October 1938. This ended my high school as I kept house while Barbara continued with her 11. She completed her 12 too - just attending Grande Prairie High School for her last year - lived in town and worked for her board.



Barbara Smart, Archie Smart, Charlie Smart, 1940.

I got away for a Home Economics course at Vermilion School of Agriculture during the winters of 1939-40 and 1940-41. Graduated in April '41 and cooked at the Grande Prairie hospital that year and again in 1943 and '44. Was married to Jack Welter in August 1944 and built a wee little house in Grande Prairie - our first home. The High School Dormitory started that September in the recently vacated Officers' Mess (now called the H hut), and again I was trying to feed the multitude. We had 56 students to care for that winter and could they eat and how! What was almost worse were the 56 food ration books that I had to look after as many of our foodstuffs were rationed during the war. Finished there in July and became a full time homemaker for our own family.



The J. Welter Family.
Fred, Margaret, Janet, Ruth, Francis and Wayne.
Front: Betty and Jack and wee Alan - one of our 5 grandchildren.
December 1977.

Barbara was married to Doug Barrett, a U.S. signalman stationed here in December 1944 and went to live in California. She still resides in Berkely and has four daughters.

In February 1945 Dad married Maude Lucas, a nurse at Beaverlodge and originally from Wetaskiwin. She was busy on the farm and in the community until they moved into Grande Prairie in 1956. Maude moved to Edmonton in 1960 and resided in the Good Samaritan hospital till her death in December 1963.

Charles finished public school at Flying Shot and took several years high school at St. Joseph's High School in Grande Prairie. He later joined the navy and was killed in a motorcycle accident in Halifax in October 1953.

Dad sold the farm in 1956 and retired to Grande Prairie and died the following May.

Jack and I still live in Grande Prairie, he retired four years ago. We have six children - four are married, and we have five grandchildren. Margaret, the eldest, is in Edmonton; Fred and Francis in Whitehorse, Yukon; Ruth in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida; Janet and Wayne here. I'm still quite active in the city with clubs, 4-H, Girl Guides, sewing, gardening, etc. It's 51 years this September since we arrived and how things have changed - agreed?

Minerva Ann and Fredrick Robert Smith

Fred was born in London, England in 1884, coming to Killarney, Manitoba, with his mother and brothers around the turn of the century. In 1910 he moved to Melfort, Saskatchewan, where he met the Sel McAusland family who were making plans to move to the Peace River country. He decided to join them in the adventure and in the fall of 1910 they journeyed by train to Edmonton, where they joined the John South family (Mrs. McAusland's parents) who were also preparing for the trip north.

The South family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. South, daughters Minerva (Trix) and Rena, and sons Floyd (Busty) and Claude, had come from the United States to Melfort, Saskatchewan in 1904. Minerva, who was born in 1895 in Moorhead, Minnesota, received most of her schooling in Melfort.

The group left Edmonton on February 22, 1911 with a caboose pulled by a team of cayuses and loads of freight and household supplies pulled by oxen. Of the journey, Mrs. Smith had written, "Leaving Edmonton February 22, we landed at Lake Saskatoon on April 1. Of the difficulties encountered, enough said. All had the same experiences. All, or at least 98% took things as they came. There was little complaining." Of the difficulties we can but imagine, however Mrs. Smith had written this caption alongside a picture of their caboose on Lesser Slave Lake, "This picture was taken on a lovely sunny day after travelling for three days in a blizzard. The caboose had blown over three times in one day and Floyd had to come back with the oxen to pull it on an upright position again." Beside another picture of Lewis' Stopping Place she had written, "It was noon of a lovely sunny day in March and the stopping place was full of huge loads of freight. Many of the people wandered around outside with the children in the sunshine while the meal was being prepared in the caboose as there was only room inside for the cook. They ate in relays. Generally the loads pulled out ahead and when the meal was finished the table was fastened to the wall, the team was hitched and we were away again down the 'long trail' to Lake Saskatoon. Hard days but happy ones."

Sel McAusland and Floyd South had come to the Peace district in 1910 and taken land near Lake Saskatoon so the destination of the party was set. Later, Floyd gave up his homestead to file on one (NW 13-71-7-W6) close to the South parents who were settled near Dimsdale. He

and Fred walked to Grouard to file as there was no land office in Grande Prairie at that time. During that time Fred also operated a store at Lake Saskatoon for John Malcom "Silver Tip" Campbell and also hauled freight from Edmonton and Edson as did Mr. John South.

On August 17, 1915, Fred and Minerva were married by the Reverend Herbert Bagnall and in October, 1915 Fred and Floyd enlisted and went to Edmonton in the 66th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force. In May, 1916 they were sent overseas with the 49th Battalion. Floyd was wounded that July. Fred fought in the costly battles of Ypres, the Somme and Vimy Ridge.

Minerva continued on the homestead by herself until Fred's return in 1919, keeping quite busy. In 1916 she took some of the best of their horses to Lake Saskatoon Fair, winning several ribbons. During this time she also 'helped out' Dr. L.J. O'Brien on some of his visits to the sick, and kept the farm going. In 1917 her parents and Rena returned to the United States and in 1919 the Sel McAusland family moved to British Columbia.



Minerva Smith's driving team, 1924.
Blanche Smith (Reheume) in buggy.

After Fred's return from the war, they acquired two more quarters of land and their farm became known as "Lakeview Farm". Two daughters were born, Mary (Mrs. Dan McKeeman) still living on the homestead, and Blanche, (Mrs. Henry Rehaume) of Woking. They had nine grandchildren. During the hard years of the 30's they worked very hard to eke out a living as did most of the district. They took great enjoyment from raising fine horses and Shorthorn cattle, and Minerva won many ribbons at the Grande Prairie fairs with her poultry. During these years, she also wrote the news from "Marple Hill" as correspondent for the Northern Tribune.



The Smiths, 1965.
Mary, Fred, Minerva and Blanche.

In 1949, Fred and Minerva retired to Grande Prairie, where Fred worked for the city as a Commissionaire until his retirement in 1964. Minerva, an early member of the W.M.S. of Flying Shot, was always active in church and community work wherever she lived. After they moved to Grande Prairie, she was active in the S.A. Home League and hospital visitation. In 1951, she suffered a broken hip which curtailed her activities, but not her cheerful self, until her death on December 26, 1969, at age 74. Mr. Smith lived alone after her death until his passing May 17, 1977 at the age of 93.

Dan McKeeman

I was born in Ireland, August 28, 1906, the second son of Mr. and Mrs. William McKeeman. I received my education at Cough, a small town about 30 miles from Belfast. My father owned two small farms, about 16 acres in all. We grew vegetables, fruits, some hay and flax.

In the early 1920's my older brother, Sam and I began to talk of leaving Ireland. After much discussion and inquiries we decided that Canada would be a good place to begin a new life.

Our parents, not wanting the family to be separated, made plans to sell their possessions and come, too. Dad applied to the Soldier Settlement Board and through them obtained a quarter section of land, SW 36-73-8, in the Buffalo Lakes district.

On March 27, 1926, our family said farewell to our homeland, relations and friends and boarded the ship "Alluna" at Belfast. The ocean voyage was a rough one, almost everyone was violently seasick. For three days the passengers were not allowed on deck due to the high waves.

We landed in Halifax, April 3, and left by train arriving in Sexsmith April 13. We were not favorably impressed. Mud and slush was everywhere. Spring breakup was in full swing. I rode with Ed Carney in a wagon to our new home. We had to set up a stove before we could eat. I'll never forget how hungry I was. We really found farming conditions different than in Ireland where everything was done by hand.

I soon grew restless again for adventure. In 1935 I moved to Ontario, returning a year later. Times were hard in those years. I stayed at home and worked at whatever jobs were available. I built several houses and barns throughout the district.

In 1941 I married Mary Smith, the eldest daughter of oldtimers Fred and Minerva Smith. We built a house near them on their farm. In the summers I farmed with my father-in-law and in the off seasons I did carpenter work. Several winters I worked at George Stephen's sawmill at Big Mountain.

Four children wre born to us. Robert, a communications electrician, works for Alberta Government Telephones. He married Heather Wilson. They have two children, Jennifer and Jason. Mary, an R.N., works part time at the Grande Prairie hospital. She married Isaac Olfert. They have two girls, Carrie and Loralee. David, a mechanical engineer, works for Proctor and Gamble. He married Marlene Roll, and they have three children, Wade, Courtney and Tiffany. Katheen, a bookkeeper, married Earl Peterson. They live in Dawson Creek and have two children, Shawn and Cooper.

In 1949 Mary's parents retired from farming and moved to Grande Prairie. We took over the farm SW 24-71-7, SE 24-71-7 and NE 13-71-7. Our first crop was complete-



L. to R.: David, Dan, Kathy, Mary Sr., Mary Jr. and Robert. The Dan McKeeman family.

ly hailed and we had no insurance. The garden was beaten into the ground, chickens were killed and windows were broken.

I worked at the construction of the North Star refinery (Department of Highways now) in the 1950's. One winter the snow was so deep that the country roads were blocked much of the time. I left the car at Swallows (now the Innes farm) and walked there every morning and home again every night.

For several weeks that winter Robert, Mary and David went to school at Percy with me in the mornings. They would get there so early that they would have to build the fires. One morning one of them had to walk back to Nordhagens to get some matches. Children were warmly dressed in those days, and hardy, too.

Our family attended the Spring Creek United Church until it was closed. We now attend the Dimsdale Community Sunday School. Services are held in the Grace Children's Home.

The years have been good, we have many precious memories, for which we are thankful.

The Floyd South Family

Floyd (Busty) South was born in Caselton, North Dakota, September 24, 1883, to John and Minerva South. In 1904 the family moved to Canada, settling in Melfort, Saskatchewan. Floyd's brother-in-law, Sel McAusland was making preparations to come to the Peace Country. He persuaded Floyd to join him, and they travelled by train to Edmonton.

In February 1910, Floyd, Ross Beatty and J.M. Campbell (Silver Tip), nicknamed because of his long silver beard, left for the Peace country by sleighs and horses. They travelled from Athabasca to Sawridge, then to Grouard, High Prairie and Sturgeon Lake.

At the Simmonette River the ice had gone out. The river was high and very treacherous. Not to be stopped by the elements, they built a raft, loaded about two and a half tons of supplies and South, McAusland and Campbell embarked for Bezanson. Beatty and a helper, Pete Fiddler, took the horses overland. The party rejoined at Bezanson and then proceeded to Lake Saskatoon, arriving about March 15. They camped on the sports ground, waiting for land agent Pete Tompkins to arrive and take their applications for homesteads.

In 1911 Floyd's parents came to the Peace. Floyd's father bought a South African Script near what is now Dimsdale. Floyd gave up his homestead at Lake Saskatoon and filed on NE 13-71-7-W6 to be near his parents.

War clouds were soon to gather. On September 24, 1915, Floyd enlisted with the 66th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force. Later, he was transferred to the 49th Canadian Regiment. After training in Edmonton, he was sent overseas, arriving in England in May, 1916. Floyd was wounded in France and spent the next six months in "Blighty". He carried a piece of shrapnel (which was too near his heart to be removed) for the rest of his life. He was later transferred to the 4th Canadian Railroad Troops.

Following demobilization, Floyd returned to his farm west of Grande Prairie in March, 1919. In June of that year he applied for and received a Soldier's Free Grant, NW 28-70-7-W6 in the Millarston district. He grazed cattle on this land during the summer months.

In August, 1919, Floyd married Harriet Pearl Dillon, the eldest daughter of W.C. Dillon. The Dillons had settled in the Dimsdale area in 1911. One son Carlin was born to Floyd and Pearl in August, 1920. They worked hard as did all the pioneers. They raised cattle, sheep, turkeys and chickens. They used incubators to hatch their chickens and poults. All their farming was done with horses. Floyd had to haul water for his stock in barrels from the "Mitchell's Marsh", two miles south and east of his home. The Souths had a very productive fruit garden. They sold raspberries, delivering them to Grande Prairie.

Two schoolteachers, Miss Burgess who taught at Flying Shot and Miss Reddick who taught at Wapiti, boarded at Souths.

Floyd was always eager to save time in his busy round of choring. For some time he had the mail clerk on the train toss his mail off at the railroad crossing half a mile south of his buildings. He risked his papers in snow, mud and wind.

In later years it was Carlin's job to get the mail at Dimsdale, once or twice a week after school.

Floyd was an adherent of the Presbyterian church, a member of the Canadian Legion and the Orange Lodge. He passed away October 4, 1934, in the Grande Prairie hospital, following a short illness.

The John M. South Family

John South was born in New York State, his wife in Wisconsin. Their honeymoon was a trip by covered wagon from Minnesota to North Dakota.

In 1904 they homesteaded near Melfort, Saskatchewan, but South had a roving nature, so in December, 1910, the family moved to Edmonton. That year, South's son, Floyd, and his son-in-law, Selby McAusland, had



On the Trail 1911 - Standing at back of caboose, Fred Smith, little girl Rena South, Mrs. John South, Minerva South (Smith), John South.

been to the Grande Prairie area, and Floyd took a homestead near where Wembley is now.

South decided to try the Peace River Country, too. On February 22, 1911, a large party left Edmonton for the north; Mr. and Mrs. J.M. South and their two unmarried daughters, Trixie (Mrs. Fred Smith) and Rena (Mrs. Ralph Price of Portland, Oregon), Floyd, Mr. and Mrs. Selby McAusland and baby, and Fred Smith. Mr. McAusland had two teams of horses and Floyd had one yoke of oxen. Furniture which the Souths brought included three bedsteads, springs and mattresses, dining table and six chairs, several rocking chairs, a china cabinet and a full length mirror (the only item damaged on the trail).

The South caboose served the entire party. It was crowded at meal time, so the travellers ate in relays, the men first. When not in use, the table was hung against the wall. At night, Rena slept on the table, Mrs. McAusland, her baby and Trixie on a matress, and Mrs. South on a small bed set in the corner. The men always slept outside.

After many adventures and near mishaps, the Souths arrived at Lake Saskatoon April 1, 1911.

The following summer, South obtained a scrip of land in the Dimsdale district. He "worked out" to earn enough money to go to Edson for a grubstake.

As fire ranger for the district, he patrolled his route (from Saskatoon Mountain to House River) once a month from April to October. He travelled with a buckboard and would try to make the trip between one Sunday and the next.

South also undertook to break 40 acres near Buffalo Lakes. He had just finished the first ten acres, when one of the oxen died of poisoning, so he sold the other oxen and bought horses. He had a sulky plow and broke 20 acres on his own scrip with horses. During the winter of 1911-12 South made two trips to Edson, the first to haul freight and the second to bring his own supplies. A round trip took about five weeks. His family were living in a house at Saskatoon Mountain, rented from "Punch the Post" Patterson. In 1912 South built a house of spruce logs on his scrip.

In 1917 Mr. and Mrs. South and daughter, Rena, went back to the United States. The farm and effects were later sold. Sometime in the 1920's Mr. and Mrs. South returned to the Grande Prairie area, settling in the Dimsdale area once again. A few years later, they bought land in the Flying Shot district and lived there until they retired, due to Mrs. South's ill health.

Mrs. South passed away August, 1939, after a lengthy illness, and Mr. South passed away December of the same year.

Fred and Pearl Steinke

We moved from the Sexsmith area to the Flying Shot area on September 1, 1961. (We had previously sold our land in the North Kleskun district and bought the SE 6-71-6-W6 from Jim Aylesworth on May 9, 1957). It was sure good to turn our five kids loose on 160 acres again.

We built a garage from single sheets of plywood to sleep in; using Jim's shack to cook and eat our meals while our house was being built. The Nilsson Brothers did the excavating and brush cutting for us. We engaged Mr. Gus Klettke to drill a well. After several days of work we were pumping beautiful soft water. When he arrived to work on Monday morning he told us the water was gone. Many days were spent going deeper, however all efforts failed and it was finally abandoned. We dug a seepage well by hand and this we used for many years supplemented by a cistern to catch rain water.

Sleeping in the garage for a few months was a novelty at first. As the fall progressed and house building was slowed, we were spending some very cold nights. We took turns sitting up to keep the air tight heater going. We put on lots of clothes to go to bed. One evening the temperature dipped to -40 degrees. A week later, on December 22, 1961, we moved into our new house. A mild chinook was blowing and we hastily moved beds, etc. into the new house. We were still minus one door but a big tarp took its place.

Our five children were fast growing up. Corrine, our oldest, left for Misericordia School of Nursing to take her training. Our son, Raphael, was attending Concordia College in Edmonton, later taking up carpentry (and is still so employed). Dian, Paul and Neil attended Harry Balfour School by bus. It was a blessed relief to see the bus stop at the gate and see my children were home. They continued through Grande Prairie High School and both Dian and Neil went on to the University of Alberta.

Corrine became an accomplished pianist. She married Al Burry and they have two sons, Collin and Aaron. She lives in Vancouver and is still following her nursing career.

Raphael lives in St. Albert with his wife, Patricia (Beer) and they have three children, Ian, Mark and Sheila. He has built many school buildings and several high rises in and around Edmonton. He also worked on the Safeway Plaza and the Towne Centre Mall in Grande Prairie.

Dian became Mrs. Len Jellicoe. Working with the Hudson Bay, they were stationed in such places as Fort Nelson, Wabowden, Manitoba, and Red Rock, Ontario. She took work with the Royal Bank and continued transferring and is still so employed in their home in Kelowna, B.C. They have no children.

Paul married Yvonne (Gitzel) and moved to a job with the Great Canadian Oil Sands Co. at Fort McMurray doing lab work. They have two children, Racquel and Nathan.



The Steinkes: Pearl and Fred with grandchildren at Christmas time—Racquel and Nathan.

Neil took a position with Park Land School Division and is a Physical Education teacher at Tomahawk School. He married Wilma (Sybom) and they have a daughter, Lana.

There were many highlights in our lives up to this time. We celebrated our Twenty-Fifth Wedding Anniversary with family and friends in 1965, which my Grandmother was able to attend at the age of 81. Attending the children's graduations. Neil winning the "Athlete of the Year" award from Grande Prairie Regional College. The children getting married and our grandchildren arriving. In 1978, a Steinke Family reunion was a highlight with about 180 people attending. It was held at the Bezanson Sports Grounds. In 1979, most attended a Church reunion on the occasion of Emmaus Lutheran "North Kleskun 50th Anniversary" where Fred was a voting member for many years.



Five Generations of Steinkes: Corrine and Collin Burry, Pearl Steinke, Rhoda Cichon, and Julia Chizawaki.

When we bought this farm, there were only five acres broke on it. Since then we have continued to clear and break; picking roots with the help of our boys and we now have 100 acres cleared. As well as working the farm, Fred also did carpenter work - helping on the Lloyd Finch house. He also built the homes of Gus Schneider at Wembley, Ken Davies, Lee Snider of Bezanson, Pete Howenko, John Popowich and Don Partlow's. He also worked on many other buildings for Bob Scott as well as Sexsmith and Ridge Valley Schools. Fred is now retired from full time carpentry. He is content to look after several head of livestock and milk one cow. Alex Cameron, our neighbour, rents and farms the cultivated acres. As horses were being phased out we used tractors to pull the wagon racks, however, with the boys leaving for school and jobs, we were short of help on the fields.

We attend the Faith Lutheran Church in Grande Prairie. God willing, we will celebrate our 40th Anniversary on July 12, 1980 in our community with all our family and friends. We are also looking forward to attending the Sexsmith and District Homecoming on July 11, 12, and 13, 1980, and another grandchild.

The Greg Stemplowski Family

I, Greg, first child of Peter and Jane (Luchak) Stemplowski was born in the Flying Shot district on October 12, 1933. I attended the Flying Shot School for grades one to nine. I was employed with Crummy Garage where I apprenticed for my mechanic and welding tickets.

I married Shirley Repetowski and we were blessed with two children Michael, July 8, 1966 and Rose Ann 1969. Rose passed away in 1972.



Rose and Michael.
Children of Greg Stemplowski.

We presently reside in the Flying Shot District and I am employed with the County of Grande Prairie.

The Peter Stemplowski Family

Peter left his homeland, Poland, at the age of 24. He had heard there was plenty of work to be had in Canada, so he struck out, landing in Quebec in the spring of 1927. His brother Steve came over to join him in 1928. When Peter landed in Quebec he heard about the Peace River Country and took the train for Rolla, B.C., which was a five day trip. Peter took a homestead near Rolla, but stayed there only six months. The wonderful Peace River area appealed to him. When first coming to this area he took on a job of erecting log buildings. Peter had spent one and a half years in the army in Poland and had some training there in building.



Ernie Watt, Steve and Peter Stemplowski.

Many of the log buildings Peter constructed are still standing. One of these was a barn in the Percy school area for Bill Griffith Sr. in the year of 1930. This barn is still being used by Bill Rynsburger who now owns that farm. In 1929 Peter built a log house and log barn for

Kees Blom. Danny Sinclair later bought this barn and moved it to his farm and is still using it as a barn for his race horses. Peter also built Alex Cameron's (Sr.) first house, a log house in 1930 and '31.

Peter had also built a log house for some friends while he was living in the Rolla, B.C. area, and one for M. Luchak, Sr., in Flying Shot area. He also made cupboards for some of his neighbors. Peter tells of how Mrs. Griffith had only a straight stick to stir the porridge with, so one evening he took a piece of wood and made a wooden spoon. Much to her surprise next morning, the wooden spoon lay on the kitchen table ready for use.

The big log barn on Mr. Deutsch's place was built by Peter in 1933 and is still standing. He used wire stretchers to pull the logs into place, with some help from Mr. Tissington's family.

In 1933 Peter married Jane Luchak. They had two children, Gregory and Anne. Annie is now married to Albert Green and lives in Grande Prairie. Gregory still lives in Flying Shot area and farms there.



Jane, Gregory and Ann Stemplowski.

Before moving to the Flying Shot area, Peter had rented land east of the airport. This land had been homesteaded by Alfred Fields, who sold it to Mr. Semack. Peter rented from Mr. Semack for three years. In 1935 he bought the land he is still living on SW 4-71-6-W6. Thomas Chapman had homesteaded this land in 1916. Kees Blom had rented it for some time, then Hugh Sinclair purchased it. Mr. Porteous from Grande Prairie had financed this farm and finally ended up owning it. He then sold it to Peter Stemplowski.

It is also interesting to note, Peter still has one of two chairs he had made years ago with only a broad axe for a tool to work with. Needless to say the chair looks as sturdy today as the day he made it.

Peter farmed with horses up to 1944. He had bought his first tractor in 1942, but had to wait till 1943 to buy machinery to go with it.

He lived in the log house he had built for himself and family for many years. In 1964 he had a new house built which he and brother Stephen live in now, 1979.

The Russell Stewart Family

by Muriel Rorem (nee Stewart)

My father, Russell Stewart, was born in Owen Sound, Ontario, in 1907, to Duncan and Catherine Stewart. In 1919, along with his parents and younger brothers, Gordon and Duncan, he moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta. My grandfather's doctor advised a dryer climate due to his lung condition. A daughter Jean was born in 1920. Times were hard on the prairies with dry spells when there was no crop so the cattle died, and my grandfather had to work on the railroad to make ends meet. My dad told how you had to walk barefoot as far as the school and then put your boots on to make them last longer.

Things were much better when the family moved to Stettler. Marie was born there in 1923, but in 1928 Grandfather, hearing of the great Peace River district, decided to move the family north by railroad.

Granny often told the story about how on her arrival she asked Dr. O'Brien what kind of people the natives were. He informed her they were the "Improved Scotch".

By then my father had finished his schooling and remained at home to help with the farming and many horses that were used in those days. The Department of Highways is situated today on the horse pasture. The Alberta Forest Service stands where the farm house once stood.

My dad met my mother, the former Catherine Marvel Macdonald, around 1929. She had been a true pioneer, having come over the Edson Trail from Merritt, B.C. by oxen drawn wagon at the age of two with her parents, Bella and Robert (Bob) Macdonald and older brothers John and Gordon. The family homesteaded at Beaverlodge then later lived in Grande Prairie for a time, later settling on a farm south of Grande Prairie - at the present time the home of Lou Albinati.

My parents were wed in December 1931, lived with my dad's parents until the following summer, then moved to a tent on their quarter section in Flying Shot - now the farm of Bill and Dorothy Beattie. During the summer a house was built with the help of Bob Macdonald and Dunc Stewart. Most of the furniture and utensils were bought at auction sales. They were given a cupboard as a wedding present. They had about four horses as well as cows, pigs, chickens, etc. There was no radio just a crystal set which my dad had made.

In 1933 they lost their first daughter, Barbara, and in 1935 I (Muriel Viola) was born, and in 1939 Joan Melva, and finally, in 1940, son Donald Robert.

I have many early memories of the horses. All the field work was done by horses as well as trips to town with loads of wood. Your feet could get mighty cold before you got there. We had an Erskin-make car but it was usually stored for the winter. We had another winter mode of transportation, which we called a caboose. It was like a little house on runners with seats around the sides, straw on the floor and an air-tight heater in the middle. You could see out the front window and there were holes for the horses' reins.



Joan, Muriel and Donald Stewart with farm dog.

Starting school for me meant a four mile walk there and four miles back. I had the company of Mae and Jack Blom, our neighbors from across the road. Florence Forseth was my first teacher. I remember her scolding me for always turning around talking to Yvonne Pivert who sat behind me. We had quite a group travelling along that road over the years. Some I remember were Dirk, Esser, Jack, Mae, Neil, Ethel and Martha Blom, Andy and Helen Zahn, Charlie Smart, Gregory, Annie and Mary Stemplowski, David, Becky, Barbara, Peter and Ruth Howes, Claire, Janet, Hubert and Neil Tissington. Early memories of school were of oiled floors, blackboards that were actually black, the old heater which roasted you on one side and froze you on the other. The teachers I remember were Miss O'Connor, Mrs. Rene, Miss Bertha (Peggy) Hodges (whom I was to meet again many years later as Mrs. James Mair on the staff at Avondale and Swanavon schools in Grande Prairie), Miss Vance, Mr. Gordon Blackmore with his rod and gun stories which we thoroughly enjoyed, Mr. Glen Dixson and Miss Pam Hunter, who became Mrs. James Tissington.

One of my earliest memories was of accompanying my mother to a shower or tea at the home of Mrs. Smart in honor of her daughter Betty who was to wed Jack Welter. There were little ladies made of marshmallows dressed in pink crepe paper sunbonnets and bell skirts at each place. Mrs. Smart was smilingly greeting her guests in a green checked dress.

Other things I like to remember are the Sundays on which I walked to Sunday School, which was either Anglican or Presbyterian depending on the Sunday. Grandma Tissington played the organ for both. She also gave of her time to come to the school and help us with our Christmas concert practice. That was always an event we looked forward to as it meant a new dress, Santa Claus (usually Archie Smart dressed up), a brown paper bag with a Mandarin orange, a delicious apple, nuts and loads of candy. We only had gas lamps and no tree lights, but we thought that everything was wonderful. Afterwards all the seats were cleared away and a dance was held. All the babies and toddlers usually fell asleep on the benches. We usually went home snuggled down in the straw under blankets in the bottom of the sleigh. The horses were glad to be going home to a warm barn.

The school picnic was another event we can remember with fondness. The sack races, three-legged races etc., with a dime for first, a nickel for second and an orange for third. The homemade ice cream and lemonade. There was always a ball game and a dance afterward.

I remember the shortcut we called the Lake Road, where Steve Stemplowski would meet us, his pockets always full of plums or other fruit. He always had a smile from ear to ear but never said much.

In the summer holidays we often got our spending money by picking potatoes or raspberries for Mr. Smart. Mrs. Maude Smart always had the "pickers" in for tea, white tablecloth, bread and butter plates and all. She, being a nurse, was also remembered for giving us our smallpox vaccination as well, if not as pleasantly. In my grade nine and final year in Flying Shot school, Mrs. Arlene Rimbey was teaching. It was the first year I had a bicycle. Many of the kids had switched to bikes from horses. I believe that was also the year they moved the school two miles closer to us.

Many of us stayed in Wapiti Lodge in Grande Prairie to attend high school. Among them were: myself, Mae Blom (now Mrs. Ken Kirkpatrick), Dorothy Cameron (now Mrs. Fred Mason), Verna Flaska and Ted Cameron.

My family moved from Flying Shot in 1954, back to the old home place which is at present the location of the Department of Forestries and Department of Highways. Later, in 1960, they built a home in Grande Prairie. My mother passed away suddenly in 1962, while my father was killed in a tragic shooting accident in 1976.

Donald has settled down in Edmonton after having lived abroad in Algeria and Norway. He is married to the



Catherine and Russell Stewart with grandchildren—Reid and Marnee Rorem.

former Faye Waldon of Edmonton, and they have four children - Trent, Terry, Tracey and Treena.

Joan is a nurse living in Grande Prairie now after having travelled the world quite extensively. She has one son, Regan.

I am married to Marvin Rorem, we had five children - Reid, Marnee, Lane, Robin and Joel. They have many more advantages than we had, but I am also sorry that they will never experience the thrill of "threshing time" - with all those teams rattling across the bridge to the barn, all the extra fuss around the house, the men talking and laughing which you could hear even though you were sent to bed. Some that I remember were: Alba Yates, Bob Cameron, Gerard Tissington, Ken Tissington, Lloyd Finch, Gordon Stewart, Wally Tissington, Tommy Sinclair, Bud Rintoul, Kees Blom, Alex Cameron, Albert Partlow, Bill Head, Joe Zahn, George Zahn, Jim Tissington, and many others.

The Bernard Tissington Story

by Stella Tissington

Bernard Tissington was born in Grande Prairie in 1916, and resided in Flying Shot until his marriage in 1938 to me, Stella Talbot of Dubuc, Saskatchewan. He then took over and operated the Spring Creek coal mine (four miles south of Dimsdale) with 13 employees until 1942. During that time he supplied coal to the hospital, schools, and restaurants in Grande Prairie, as well as a big contract for the Army Barracks during the war and also to local residents. This gave work to several neighbors of the community.

Bernard sold the mine and we moved to Grande Prairie so he could work as a carpenter at the Airport. He was doing carpenter work with Charlie Turner Sr. of Grande Prairie, when he fell working on the Ashdown Building in 1947, causing him to be crippled from then on.

Then in the fall of 1947 we moved out to Dimsdale, working for Hystad Brothers building offices, cook house and bunk houses. We lived there for four years, Bernard working as yard foreman and shipper, when the building was done. When Hystads moved to Valemont, B.C. we then moved back to Grande Prairie and Bernard built a house. He went to work for Karran's Plumbing as purchasing agent, as well as building our own houses in the evenings, selling each one as they were finished. Then finally he quit Karran's and went into building full time on his own, with me as his only helper until we got ahead enough to hire carpenters, etc. Then I went on the books. I remember the Holiday Pay Inspector coming to inspect the books for the first time. He phoned to see when it would be convenient for him to come. I said it would be better tomorrow, as I didn't have all the stamps in, and he said that would be fine, he'd come then. I asked him if he knew where we lived, as I did the books from the house. He said, "Yes, I'm looking at your house right now, from the Pepsi Cola bottling works, but I'll come back tomorrow." I was sure pleased, as I got cracking and had everything up to date for him the next day.

J.B. Tissington Const. Ltd. flourished and then we started Tissington Industries in the Airport Hanger. We now supplied housing as far north as Alaska, Baker Lake, Sax Harbour, Inuvik, etc. Tissington Industries received a certificate of merit from Mr. Ratslafe, the Minister of Industry and Tourism, for outstanding achievement.

A fire demolished the Industries in 1972. At that time a hotel for Fort Simpson was already built, ready to go, just waiting for the trucks to come and pick it up. It all burnt. So we had to rebuild it on the tarmack, as an obligation had to be met. We got it built again, but the truck driver hauling it up went to sleep and piled it, so it had to be rebuilt again.

Then Bernard bought another building at the Airport and continued building until his retirement.



Bernard and Freddie Tissington.

We were blessed with three children, Fred born at the coal mine in 1942, Dennis born at Dimsdale in 1948, and Bette born in 1951 at Dimsdale. Fred and Dennis followed in their dad's footsteps as carpenters, and Bette became bookkeeper for the Company.

Fred married a nurse, Gayle Wright. They have three children, Shelly now in University in Edmonton, and Robbie and Laurie still in school.

Dennis married Barbara Schackelton. They have two children, Susan and Teri, both in school.

Bette married Al Reid, who came from Ottawa. They have two small children, Scott and Stacie.

Now they are all in the building together as Tissington Homes. Our son-in-law, Al Reid, owns Prairie Villa Realty, and sells the homes.



J. B. Tissington receiving a Certificate of Merit for Outstanding Achievement from Mr. Ratslafe, Minister of Industry and Tourism.

The Gerard Tissington Family

Following his father's return from World War I, Gerard came with his two sisters and a brother to the Flying Shot district where his father had taken up land. Those early years were difficult for the family because his father was not well as a result of the war. Being the eldest, the job of helping at home fell to Gerard, who spent long hours in the saddle herding cattle, and trying to go to school in between jobs. The other four boys and a girl were born after the move to Flying Shot.

As the younger boys became older and a slow government finally granted his father a pension, things became easier, as they did for most of the early settlers who were willing to put in long hours of hard work.

In the year 1936 Gerard was able to buy a quarter section of his own from the Soldiers' Settlement Board. That year he married Helen Foy who had come to Flying Shot to teach school. Together they began the long task of building up a successful farm and raising and educating four children. Gerard is still active in farming which he carries on in partnership with his eldest son Hubert, who, with his wife, the former Jean Girvan, and three children, lives nearby.

Of the other three children Claire Kermacks, the eldest, is a nursing consultant in Vancouver, where the youngest son Neil has a leather goods business. Janet, the other daughter, with her husband Bill Farquhar and four children, lives in Dawson Creek.



Claire, Neil, Janet, Hubert,
Helen and Gerard Tissington.

Over the years Gerard has always been active in affairs of the community. He was instrumental in bringing registered breeding stock to the district for use of all farming nearby, and in 1968 he bought the Grand Champion Yorkshire Sow at the Edmonton Spring swine sale. When the Harry Balfour school was formed he served on the first board and has been for many years a director of the Bear Lake Rural Electrification association of which he is now Chairman. He is also presently serving on the County Development Appeal Board.

Gerard and Helen hope to remain on their farm even after retirement-a place that will always be "The Farm" to their four children.

James Job Tissington

Born at Codner, Derbyshire, England in 1885, Jim spent his early years in the coal mines and also drove sight-seeing tours. It was on one of these tours he became acquainted with Lily Smithard of Ripley, England. They were married at Riddings, England on September 13, 1911.



Lily Tissington, 1911.

When Jim's sister, Mary Squires, returned to England on a visit with stories of the Great Peace country's rich farm land for homesteading, Jim decided it was a great opportunity for a young couple. So, leaving his bride of six weeks, he accompanied his sister back to Canada. From Edmonton they travelled over the Long Trail. They arrived safely in Grande Prairie about six weeks after leaving Edmonton. Jim filed on homesteads for himself and his father. He spent the rest of the winter hauling lumber from the Argonaut Sawmill to Grande Prairie.

He then returned to Edmonton to meet his wife, parents and some brothers and sisters, 13 in all who were supposed to be on the Titanic. When they went to board the Titanic it had been over booked and they had to take the next boat out. Jim abandoned his homestead for his father who had arrived one day too late to claim his. Jim

then settled in Edmonton for four years where Gerard, Lois, and Winnifred were born. During the period in Edmonton the pioneer spirit never left Jim. He wasn't content to work in Edmonton although there were plenty of jobs to be had.

He decided to come back to Grande Prairie so he and three of his nephews caught the first freight train to come over the newly finished rail line. His wife and three children followed on the first passenger train. Jim then filed on another homestead SW 8-76-6-W6. He settled his family on a farm northwest of Grande Prairie where Bernard was born in May, 1916. Being loyal to King and Country, Jim joined the army in June and went overseas.

On returning from the war in 1918, Jim moved his family to Sam Albu's homestead in Flying Shot while he built a home on his homestead which was just across the road. So, one final move and home to stay for a good many years. Here Kenneth, Edith, Wallace, James, Mary and Sidney were born (Mary died in hospital, only three days old).

Due to army disabilities Jim was unable to do strenuous work and spent many months in hospital in Edmonton and in bed at home. Even so, through the years, Jim and Lily were very active in Flying Shot community affairs. Jim served on council for some years. Lily was active in church work. She played the organ for church services and Christmas concerts, taught Sunday School, and was president of the Women's Missionary Society (W.M.S.) for the Presbyterian Church for many years. She was awarded life membership in the W.M.S. for her faithful service.

Jim was very interested in purebred stock and raised Shorthorn cattle and Berkshire pigs. Jim and Lily were also avid gardeners. Having such a large family, the need for lots of vegetables was apparent but they also raised some for sale. Of course, they had lots of help with the hoeing and weeding (boy, do we all remember that!). They also had a lot of fruit, red, white and black currants, raspberries, strawberries, and rhubarb, so with the wild fruit, saskatoons, blueberries, chokecherries and cranberries, there was a good variety of jam, jelly, and canned fruit. Though times were hard, we never went hungry. We always had our own milk, butter, eggs, and meat.



Lily, Ken and Jim Tissington.

It wasn't all hard work; there were lots of fun times, too. In the winter, there was a homemade ski slope from the roof of a building with boards to the bank on a dam and across, also skiing behind a horse and skating on the dam. Then in the summer, having a large flat pasture, there were great ball games. Young and old would come for miles on a Sunday, some to play ball, some to play horse shoe and some to just visit.

In 1949 Jim and Lily sold the old homestead to son, Kenneth, who was a veteran of World War II. Kenneth had been over almost the same trek as Jim had been in World War I. Jim then bought Lot 16 from Mr. Howes, living there only a short time, then retiring to Grande Prairie in 1954. Lily passed away in June of 1959 and Jim in May of 1961. They were predeceased by a daughter Lois in 1955 and a grandson, Raymond Bean, in 1957.



Sam, Jim holding Dean, Stan and Ivan Tissington.

Gerard, Edith and James still live in the Flying Shot district, Winnifred and Bernard in Grande Prairie. Kenneth married Mabel Bradley and had one son, Terry. He is now married to Nan Wright and has two more sons and two daughters, Frances, Florence, Frank and Jim. They live in Chilliwack. Wallace married Wava Hankens and has a daughter, Karren, and a son, Bruce. He is now married to May Hill and has a daughter, Ruth, and two sons, Calvin and Melvin. They live in Creston, B.C.

Sidney married Evelyn Kerr and has two sons, David and Keith, and a daughter, Donna. They live in Grimshaw.



Back: Sid and Evelyn Tissington, Elmer and Edith (Tissington) Valin, Bernard and Stella Tissington, Jim and Pam Tissington, Wallace and May Tissington.
Front: Winnie (Tissington), Stephenson, Helen and Gerard Tissington and Harold Stephenson.

The Elmer Valin Family

Edith Tissington married Elmer Valin on June 16, 1942. On June 26, Elmer started his basic training in Grande Prairie, after which he was sent to Kingston, Ontario. Edith followed and when he was moved from there, she went to Lethbridge and stayed there until after their oldest daughter, Anne Christina, was born in April, 1943. In June, Edith and Anne flew to Vancouver to join Elmer but one hour before they arrived he was moved to Naniamo, B.C. for training before being sent to Kiska in the Aleutian Islands. So Edith and Anne went to Naniamo and stayed there until he returned, and from there to Vernon and then to Chilliwack. Then, when Elmer was sent back east, they came back to Flying Shot to stay until Elmer's discharge in 1946. In April, 1945, another daughter, Theona Elizabeth, was born. Then in October 1946 a son, Eric James, joined the family. In March 1947 the Valins moved into Grande Prairie where Elmer was employed.

In July 1952 son number two, Dwight Allan, was born. Then in July 1956 Debra Janet came along.

In May 1957 the Valins purchased Lot 16 in Flying Shot from Edith's parents, where they lived in the house Mr. Watson had built in 1916. Here Colleen Lynne was born in 1964.



Dwight, Jim, Theona, Edith, Elmer, Anne, Colleen and Debbie Valin.

In 1969 Valins built a new house but the old one still stands very firm.

Besides farming, Elmer has also driven school bus for over 20 years. Elmer and Edith have also delivered Rural Route #2 mail for over ten years. When they started there were around 75 patrons. Now, though the mileage has not changed, there are nearly 300 patrons.

Anne took her schooling at Montrose, Harry Balfour and Grande Prairie High. She then took her training and became a Certified Nursing Aide. In 1962 she married Lennard Scarrow. In 1967 they moved to Fairview where Len worked for Fairview College and Anne at the hospital, then in Dr. Chung's office. In 1974 they bought a farm in Hines Creek and Len is now head maintenance man at the Fairview Hospital and Anne works part time there. They have six children Joanne, Dianne, Leanne, Raeanne, Cheranne, and Keith.

Theona (Ona) took her education at Montrose, Harry Balfour and Grande Prairie High. Unlike Anne, she didn't know what kind of work she wanted to train for, so when she finished her Grade 12 she went to work at CFGP. Next she tried work at the Bank of Commerce, and from there went to Alberta Government Telephones where she still works as Commercial Assistant Manager. In 1964 she married Victor Auclair. Vic was one of seven men to become the first in Canada to reach journeyman level in the field of an electrical mechanic program. In 1976 they bought a farm in Bezanson where Vic is a full time farmer. They have two sons Eugene (Gene) and Scott.

Eric James (Jim) took his schooling at Montrose, Harry Balfour and Grande Prairie Vocational High School. When Jim finished grade 12, he worked for Horace Partlow until fall work was done. He then went to work for Alberta Power for two years. Following that he got a job with Alberta Government Telephones, first at Peace River then Red Deer, Valleyview, and Grande Prairie. He is now plant superviser at High Level. On September 11, 1971 while splicing underground cable in Sundre, Alberta, Jim and Andrew Anderson saved a co-worker's life. Bill Briggs, who was overtaken by carbon monoxide poisoning while resting in the line truck, was unable to help himself. There had been a very bad storm and Jim and his co-workers had been working around the clock to get communications working, resting only short spells in the vehicles. Due to Jim's quick thinking and first aid training, Bill is alive today. The doctor told Jim another five minutes and it would have been too late and also if he hadn't given the right first aid Bill would have been paralyzed the rest of his life. Bill, very grateful for his life, recommended Jim for the "IBEW Life Saving Award", an award given by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. This award, which is presented in all of Northern America, is given only to the most courageous of people. Jim received his plaque and pin on August 22, 1972.

Jim married Gerrene Gardner of Peace River in 1969. They have two children, a son Troy and a daughter, Amber.

Dwight took his schooling in Harry Balfour and Grande Prairie Vocational High School. On completion of grade 12, Dwight went to work for Cookshaw Electric for a year. Then he and a partner started their own business of power line construction. Dwight married Linda Kennedy in 1971 and has two sons, Darren and Christopher. In 1977 Linda's sudden death was a great shock. Dwight sold his share of the business and bought a farm in the Flying Shot district and worked for Hubert Tissington for two years. Dwight married Maureen Marta of Grande Cache in 1978, and they are now living there.

Debra (Debbie) took her schooling at Harry Balfour and Grande Prairie Composite High school. On completion of grade 12 she went to work for Alberta Government Telephones and is still with them. Debbie married Don Tate in 1975 and has two daughters Kimberly and Jennifer. Debbie and Don were later divorced and Debbie and the girls live in the Flying Shot district.

Colleen is still at home going to Grande Prairie Composite High School. She does volunteer work at the hospital (candy striper). Colleen was one of four workers chosen from the volunteer workers to go to Calgary in 1979 to accept the Junior Citizen of the Year Award from Lieutenant Governor Ralph Steinhauer.

Alf Walters Story

Alf and Jean Walters, formerly of the Dimsdale district, had three children, Robert Glen (Butch) born



The Walters: Jean and Alf, Lane, Robert and Carol.

September 4, 1947, Carol Ann born July 12, 1949 and another son, Alfred Lane (Lane), born March 28, 1954.

Butch and Carol started their education at Lucky Tree School located kitty-corner from Fred Budesheim's building site. Harry Balfour School then opened, and they went there to grade nine, then on to the Composite High to finish their education.

Butch was married in October, 1966 to Jackie Martin. They have two children, Cheryl and Kenny. They are living on an acreage by Grovedale.

Carol was married in February, 1973 to Harold Fiveland. They have lived by Flying Shot Lake since June of 1973. They have one son named Chad Edward, born in November of 1974.

Lane also went to Harry Balfour and to the Composite High for his education. He was married in July of 1976 to Dianne Tosczak and lives in Grande Prairie.

Thom and "Bella" Waterman

Thom and Bella Waterman came to the Spring Creek - Flying Shot area soon after World War I. They purchased the NE 12-71-7-W6 and a fraction of the SE 12-71-7-W6. They made their home on the northeast quarter for several years.

The land on which they lived was formerly owned by Morris Gleason. Morris had a log sod-roofed shack. We do not know if he was the original owner or if he acquired the property from some other homesteader. He lived there during the "war years" and the influenza epidemic. Mr. Fletcher once went to call on him and when he opened the door the blast of heat drove Mr. Fletcher back and he had to catch his breath before entering. Morris had the "Flu" and was keeping himself comfortably warm.



L. to R.: Mrs. Waterman, Mrs. Mitchell, Mrs. Tissington, Isobel George, seated Mrs. Hugel and Mrs. Henderson.

Thom and Bella had a neat one story frame house on the same location. Soon after his arrival, Thom was selected to be a member of the local school board. He served in this capacity for almost the entire period of his residence in the district. During the last years he was chairman. The Watermans had no family of their own.

Thom was a happy sort of person. He spoke with an English accent and was always neat and dressy. Although he had back trouble he and Bella worked hard on the farm. They grew grain and raised cattle, chickens and turkeys. The money from the sale of cream and eggs provided for the household expenses. Wheat was their "cash" crop, oats and barley were grown for the livestock. Thom did his farming with horses.

Bella usually drove the four horses and the binder at harvest time. Thom did the stooking. He occasionally hired Jim Aylesworth or Peter George to help. Thom always had his binder set to make very large bundles.

Thom was a veteran of World War I. He belonged to the Grande Prairie branch of the Canadian Legion. He was also a member of the Grande Prairie Oddfellows.

The John Watson Family

John Watson was born in Dumbartonshire, Scotland in 1864. In 1885 he married Janet Gillon Aitken, who was born in 1860 in the County of Stirling, Scotland. At that time Janet was a maid at an estate at Edinbarnet. Three daughters, Christina, Nellie and Jesse were born to John and Janet while in Scotland.



Mr. and Mrs. John Watson of Flying Shot.

In 1891 John Watson visited Canada. Never one to be idle he found employment as market gardener at Moosomin, Saskatchewan, but after a few months he

returned to his native land, and his wife, waiting patiently for him north of the Clyde, near Glasgow.

Early in life he had decided to take up gardening, served his apprenticeship on an estate at Edinbarnet, became journeyman gardener, then second gardener to the Duke of Montrose at Buchanan Castle by Loch Lomond, then head gardener at Clippen's House and market gardener for himself at Stirlingshire.

Four years following his return, the lure of the wide open spaces of Western Canada became irresistible, so in 1896 Mr. Watson and family came to Moosomin where two more children were born, George and Margaret. For the next five years he was growing grain and garden produce near Welwyn, Saskatchewan, later at Dubuc and in 1910 he removed to the Arrow Lakes, B.C.

In August of 1916 he answered the call of the Peace, settling on the western shores of Flying Shot Lake. From the very first Mr. Watson determined to devote his attention to the production of fruits and vegetables, rather than grain farming.

Sending to Grande Forks, B.C., he obtained Black Naples and Booskoop Giant Black, Ruby (red) and White Grape currants, Oregon Champion gooseberries, Snyder blackberries, Cuthbert raspberries and Progressive everbearing strawberries. Some of these varieties were later discarded owing to frost-killing but his success with the others has been really worthwhile.

Mr. Watson also had some noteworthy success with ornamental shrubs, securing the foundation stock from the Dominion Horticulturist. From his stock many residents of the Peace have secured the seedlings with which they have beautified their homes.

In the market gardening field Mr. Watson met with much commercial success, his produce always commanding a ready sale at good market prices.



Mrs. John Watson of Flying Shot in her potato patch in 1918.

Tribute by W.D. Albright

W. D. Albright, superintendent of the Beaver Lodge sub-experimental station has closely followed the work of Mr. Watson for several years with great interest.

The following tribute written in October, 1933, sums up a sincere appreciation of the regard in which Mr. Albright has held this Scotch pioneer of the north:

"A tall, straight man, Mr. Watson combines expert efficiency with gentlemanly bearing, modest mien and a very kindly spirit. His judgement of things horticultural is locally unchallenged. He speaks with quiet assurance but never boasts. His seventieth year finds him ready to relinquish his task and seek a quiet suburban home in the temperate climate of Vancouver Island. "Evening asks for peace." But his is full of enthusiasm for the Peace River region, convinced that it is a young man's country, that it has a great future and that even in horticulture, opportunity beckons. He has remained longer on his present farm that anywhere else he has ever lived. Personally and horticulturally he has proven a real asset. Such as he are the makers of the country."

Janet was not one to attend different clubs but stayed home raising her family. She loved working in her flower garden and attended the Presbyterian Church where John was an elder.

She never lost her Scottish brogue and visitors to their home were delighted with her talk, especially as she dropped a Gaelic word or phrase here or there.

John Watson passed away in 1934 followed by Janet in 1942.

The Watt Family

Ernie Watt's grandfather, Samuel, was twelve years old when his dad and mother decided to immigrate to Canada from England with their family. They landed in Brock Township in Suderland, Ontario. Samuel Watt later married an Irish girl by the name of Bridget Dobel. Ernie's dad, Arthur Watt, was born in 1873 in Suderland, Ontario, where he grew up, and later married Mary Purvis at Cannington, Ontario.

In 1906, Arthur and Mary Watt and their two sons, Ernie and Earl, moved to Saskatchewan. We settled at Dundurn, Saskatchewan. Arthur bought three quarters of land near Dundurn. He also started a furniture store in Dundurn and was mortician for that area in 1906 and 1907. Ernie remembers the coldness of those years when some people lost their lives due to the cold weather.

In 1908, Arthur sold his furniture store and land. He then pioneered in the Macklin area at Evesham, Saskatchewan. While living in that area, Ernie remembers the time his dad set out for town on skis, an eleven mile trip. While on his way home, snow blindness affected his sight and he got lost. He was out all night in 40 below zero weather. His feet were frozen so badly that he had to have part of each foot amputated.

While at Evesham, Arthur had acquired a half section of what was then called scrip land. After hearing a lot about the great Peace River country he wrote to Ottawa to get the government surveyor's report on the area. It sounded very promising. So, they decided to move there. They wanted to move to a country where there were trees for shelter and where they could go fishing. (Incidentally, Ernie has yet to catch his first fish!)

The family landed at Edson in May, 1914, stopping at the Immigration Hall to get the necessary information before setting out on the Edson Trail trip to the Peace River Country. We left Edson the twenty-fourth of May, with a wagon load of settlers' effects that were most needed, five horses and eight head of cattle.

The weather was very good when we left Edson. We had to travel very slow as the cattle could not travel as fast as the horses. At the Athabasca River the cattle were tiring out. After crossing the Athabasca River by ferry, we travelled on to Baptiste River.

We carried oats for feed for the horses, and cattle had to eat what little grass they found on the way. This time of year grass was very scarce.

There was a ferry at Baptiste River but due to low water we had to ford the river. Next we came to the Little Smoky River, where we ran into a bush fire. At the stopp-

ing house there, run by Ike Gilpin, we were advised by Ike and the fire rangers, and Mr. Stevenson, a Spanish American War veteran, to wait until the fire came to the river bank, the fire being on the other side of the river.

We stayed there for two days. The strategy was to take off in early morning before the fire fanned up again. We crossed the river at two a.m.; it was a hot trip crossing where the fire had gone through. The next stopping place was Tony Creek, where we camped over night. We arrived there around two p.m. travelling from two a.m. to two p.m. Being very tired, we stayed there the rest of the day and over night to rest ourselves and our animals.

Next stopping place was at House River, which we crossed by fording. Finally reaching high ground, we travelled about three miles and camped for the night. It started to rain and rained so hard, Ernie's dad went out around to look things over. He found a Beaver dam near their camping place and the water was so high, we decided to move out fast or be flooded out. Due to the rain we had a very muddy trip for some time, which didn't make for very fast travelling. One horse had played out so we had to leave him behind, which left us only three horses as the other one was a young colt.

Unlike lots of the Edson Trail travellers who travelled together with three or more wagons and families, the Watts were travelling alone, so we had no one to help us through the tough spots.

We finally reached dry land again near Sturgeon Lake where we again camped over night. The next place Ernie remembers coming to is the Big Smoky River, where they crossed on the ferry run by the Goodwin brothers. After crossing here we came to what was called the Red Willow slough where we again set up camp for the night. Here for a change we had good weather.

While camped here we met a man by the name of Bill Blair who was walking out from Grande Prairie heading for Edmonton. We had lit a smudge to protect the horses from mosquitoes and Billy stopped to chat with us. He told us quite a bit about the country we were heading to.

It started to rain again and rained for three days, so we camped there until it quit raining. When we started out, not knowing just what lay ahead of us, we got into a real slough where our horses just couldn't budge the wagon. Hugh Thompson was building his first log cabin about one half mile from here so we asked him to come to our aid with his team of horses. This still wasn't enough horse power to move the wagon, so Hugh told us to go ask Shorty Curry who had a large team of horses. With the six horse power, we finally got moving.

Hugh and Shorty both advised us to have Shorty leave his team on as far as the north end of the slough. After getting around the slough, we found our way back to the Edson Trail where we camped again. The following day, June 1, 1914 the Watt family finally arrived in Grande Prairie. There wasn't much to see at Grande Prairie at that time, but we were sure glad to see what there was. The first place we stopped was the Immigration Hall, which was kept by a Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Kitchen.

We stayed for one week and later attended the First of July Sports, where we got acquainted with quite a few people. We met John Harris, best known as Kleskun Hill John, and his family, also the Chris McDonald family whom we had met while crossing the Smoky River. Ernie's mother and Mrs. McDonald had become quite friendly while at the Smoky River and so felt like they had met an old friend when they met at the First of July Sports.



Ernie Watt's Dad, Mother sitting down, Left is Earl, Right is Ernie. The first log house Ernie's Dad built.

From here Mr. and Mrs. Watt and sons Ernest and Earl, went to their homestead, SW 3-71-6-W6 in the Flying Shot district. Our nearest and, one might say, only white neighbors those first few years were Mr. and Mrs. Clifford who lived about one and a half miles away. The Cliffords had come into the area in 1905 and their daughter Hilda was the first white child born in the Flying Shot area near Grande Prairie.

The Watt family had to depend on their few cows and what garden they could grow on the homestead for their livelihood. Mrs. Watt made butter from the cream they got from their cows and Ernie says there was no sale for such. Ten pounds of butter would have flooded the market in Grande Prairie at that time. We hunted prairie chicken and rabbits to supplement our diet with flour from the Joe Voz flour mill in Grande Prairie.

In 1916 Ernie remembers doing some trapping to supplement their income. Fox and coyotes were the main animals caught. A good fox hide might bring eight to ten dollars, a coyote hide might bring four to five dollars. One fox Ernie remembers is one which looked like a high crossed silver fox, which sold for $85 and then there was a multi-colored one that the buyer compared it's color with a patchwork quilt which sold for $35.

Ernie was 17 years old when they moved onto the homestead. His first year of trapping was very successful, but beginners luck ran out after that. He always stayed



L. to R.: Arthur Watt, Ernie Watt, Harry Ward, Bert Edwards, Tom Bousfield, Edgar (Slim) Bousfield, Earl Salisbury, Fred Lanterman.
In front: Walter Martin. Taken at Big 7 Sawmill by Wapiti River.

home and farmed with his Dad. They purchased more land as time went on. Ernie had also taken a homestead, SE 31-70-6-W6.

The Watts farmed with horses, and in 1928 they bought their first tractor and machinery to go with it. When the depression hit, they went back to farming with horses until after World War II when they again farmed with tractor. In 1928 they were growing Marquis wheat and crops were good but grain generally graded tough. Wheat then sold from one dollar to one dollar and fifty cents per bushel. In 1929, crops were good but depression hit and wheat prices dropped to as low as nineteen to twenty-five cents a bushel.

Ernie's mother passed away on January 25, 1944. His dad lived to be a ripe age of 84 and passed away in October of 1957.

Ernie is still living on their original homestead quarter of land in 1980. In 1957 he made arrangements to rent his land to John Popowich in an agreement where they helped each other. John's son, Ken Popowich, still rents this land.

Earl attended the first old log school in the Flying Shot area in the old homestead inspector's house, located by the H.B. Clifford home, store and trading post west of Flying Shot Lake, now known as the Rintoul place.

Earl filed on the SE 36-70-7-W6 where he farmed with horses. He worked in saw mills and coal mines for extra money.

Earl married Olive, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Mutch of Wanham. They moved to High Prairie, where Earl worked in a mine on the Little Smoky River during part of the war years. When the war was over he started carpentering.

In 1956 the family moved back to Grande Prairie. They now had five children, Evy, Edna, Arthur, Ernest and Harvey. They have 15 grandchildren. Around 1970 Earl moved to Williams Lake, British Columbia, where he built a house for themselves and some houses to rent out.

When his health failed, he finally sold everything and went to live with his daughter, Edna and son-in-law, Chris Neilsen of Victoria for a time. His last three years were spent in a nursing home there.

Earl passed away November 23, 1978, and was brought home for internment in the family plot in the Grande Prairie Cemetery. He was 75 years old.

The Yates Family

by Ed and Alva Yates

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Yates first read about the Peace River Country in the newspaper, and got some maps to look over. Thinking there were better farming opportunities here, they decided to leave Decker, Manitoba, and head for the Peace River area.

They arrived here in January of 1927 with one horse, some cattle and some horse implements. This they had brought in a car by railroad. It took about seven days to make the trip.

Fred and Mary Yates had a family of six. Their sons Wilfred, Edward and Alva came with their folks. Luther, Nellie and Jennie did not come. Wilfred married Kathleen Foster and lived in Grande Prairie for some time. They had three girls and one son. Wilf and son, George, farm near Sexsmith, Alberta. Ed married Evelyn Brent and they live in the Grovedale area. They have one daughter and one son. Luther married and lives near Winnipeg, Manitoba. Jennie married Charley Lewis, who was later killed on his way home from the war. Jennie now lives in Grande Prairie. She had three sons - Russel, Ray and Fred.

Nellie remained a spinster and lived in Manitoba until her later years when she moved to Grande Prairie and lived on her brother Alva's place until she passed away in 1975.

When Mr. and Mrs. Yates and sons came to the Grande Prairie area they were to rent a place owned by Wylie Sawyer. However, when they arrived with stock and implements, Mr. Sawyer had rented the land to someone else. The first land they rented was owned by Frank Thompson. From there they moved on to the Jack Patterson Sr. place, then they rented Mr. Boss' land south of Grande Prairie. Later they moved to land owned by Bill Salmond, the place where Mae and Bill Head live now. Later Alva bought the land he now lives on, SW 11-71-6-W6. He also bought the quarter across the road from him which George Fiest owned, in 1915, SE 10-71-6-W6. Mr. Fiest had a brick yard on this land.

Mr. Yates and son Alva farmed together many years. Cupids little arrow struck Alva's heart and in October of 1942 he and Ida Wiest were married. Al Wymer and Jimmy Oliver were Yates' neighbors, as were Ernest Watt and Ernie's father and mother, when the Yates first moved here.

Alva and Ed can remember Elmer Massie threshing grain for them in 1929, and Sel McAusland threshed for them in 1930.

It might be interesting to note that Alva still had the old threshing machine, horse drawn hay rake, binder for cutting grain into bundles and the breaking plow with which he broke some of his land.



Mr. and Mrs. Yates.



Mr. Yates and Alvie.

Alva had bought two more quarters of land but has now sold all but 25 acres. He has built a new house for himself and Ida to enjoy in their retirement years.

The Adam Zahn Family

Adam Zahn was born in North Dakota, U.S.A. in 1888. He came to Canada in 1910 with a friend to take up fur trapping. He sold his traps to his friend and took up homesteading near Leader, Saskatchewan, before the town of Leader existed. His parents, brothers and sisters came a short while later.

He married Bertha Kuhn in 1914. Bertha Kuhn was born in a German settlement in Russia in 1893. She arrived in Canada in 1911 with her parents, the eldest of nine children. A tenth child was born in Canada. The family settled near Mendham, Saskatchewan. They built a sod house, in which her parents lived until 1927.

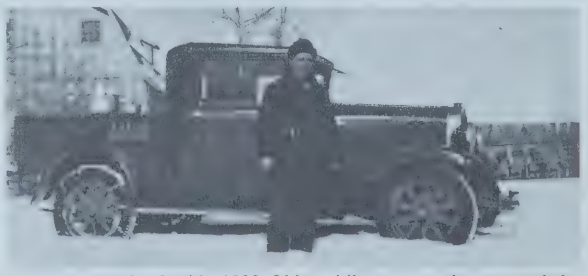
Six children were born to the Zahns in Saskatchewan. They moved to Lulu Island, B.C. in 1924. They heard about the wonderful Peace River country, and bought a farm in 1929 two miles north of Grande Prairie now part of the city of Grande Prairie. The Zahns sold this farm in 1930 and bought one from Tom Chapman on the east side of Flying Shot Lake. All the buildings were made of logs and the family had their first introductions to bed bugs. My, how those bed bugs thrived, with two adults and six children to feed on! Two more children were born while living there. A new house was built in stages, as money became available. Most of the lumber in the house was logged, sawed, planed and built by the family.

Zahns sold the Flying Shot farm in 1949 and moved to Kelowna, B.C. with the two youngest children. Mr. Zahn passed away in Kelowna in 1967. Mrs. Zahn is in a Senior Citizens home in Summerland, B.C.

The children are - Joe of Valemount, B.C.; Min of Richmond, B.C.; Karl of Summerland, B.C.; Emma of Grande Prairie, Alberta; Kay passed away in 1971 in Rutland, B.C.; George of Grande Prairie, Alberta; Andy of Calgary, Alberta, and Helen of Williams Lake, B.C.



Zahn's 1919 Oil Pull Rumbley moving granaries in the 1930's.



Mr. Adam Zahn beside 1928 Oldsmobile converted to a truck by himself.



Mr. and Mrs. Adam Zahn.



Mr. and Mrs. Adam Zahn—50th Anniversary.

Gleanings from the Flying Shot News as reported in the Northern Tribune

August 8, 1922 - Miss Morrison resigned her position as teacher and will be replaced by Mr. Willis. Mr. Griffiths has leased the old Barrett place. He is expecting Mrs. Griffiths and the kiddies home soon.

September 14, 1923 - Flying Shot Community League minutes of meeting. The meeting was called to order by President McLean. As there were not enough members present to constitute a quorum the business meeting was postponed and the program carried on with. Those taking part were Janet Rempel, Lena Rempel and Hilda Clifford. Mr. Dixon of Grande Prairie addressed those present on 'What one gets from Education'.

February 11, 1924 - Minutes of meeting held at the home of Mr. McLean. Meeting was called to order by the President - Minutes of previous meeting were read and adopted. Mr. Fletcher led a discussion on appointment of members to the committees. An all round discussion took place and it was decided to carry on as per constitution for the present. Motion: That any member of the League, if asked to take part in any program must do so if it is at all within his or her power. Moved by Mr. Willis. Seconded by Mr. Hugel. Carried: Mr. Willis gave a short talk on League of Nations. It was decided to hold a Box Social at Mr. Rempel's home on March 14th. God Save the King.

December 5, 1924 - Flying Shot Community Hall. Meeting was called to order by Mr. Watson, the President. Minutes of previous meeting were read and adopted. Moved by Mr. McLean, seconded by George Watson that the Ladies Institute have the Hall free on December 12, for box social and dance to raise funds for Children's Christmas Tree. Moved by Mr. Rempel, seconded by Mr. Chapman that enough stove pipes be obtained to go the full length of the hall. Moved by Mr. Hugel, seconded by Mr. Rempel that a load of wood be sent to the hall. Mr. Chapman kindly donated a load of wood. Election of Officers for the Term. Moved by Mr. Watson that Mr. McLean serve as chairman. Officers - President: Mr. Watson, Vice President: Mr. Hooper, Sec-treasurer: Miss Boughen, House and Programme Committee: Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Bain, Mr. Rempel, George Watson. Carried: After the election of officers it was moved by Mr. McLean that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Mr. Rempel. Carried:

January 5, 1925 - Flying Shot Community Hall. Meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Watson. The minutes of the previous meeting was adopted as read. Moved by Mr. Chapman, seconded by George Watson that the money left from Christmas Tree fund be left in the hands of secretary to be used for the children. Carried: Moved by Mr. Rempel, seconded by Rob Cameron that we hold a whist drive and dance on January 23. Carried: Moved by Mr. Rempel, seconded by Mrs. Chapman that the surplus of money collected from the dance Friday, be used to defray the bill of lumber. Carried: Moved by Mr. Chapman, seconded by Mrs. Chapman that the meeting be adjourned. Carried:

Flying Shot Community League roll-call - 1925 members included: Mr. Watson, Mrs. Watson, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Rempel, Mrs. Rempel, Mr. G. Watson, Mr. Hugel, Mrs. Hugel, Mr. Hooper, Mrs. Hooper, Mrs. Bain, Mr. Larson, Mrs. Waterman, Mr. W. Mitchell, Miss Boughen, Mr. J. Eisenman, Mr. C.W. Doffre, Mr. McLean, Mr. Tissington, Mrs. Tissington, Mrs. Barrett, Mr. R. Cameron, Mr. F. Bousfield and Mr. E. Watt. The membership fees were 25¢ per person.

March 28, 1927 - We are sorry to report Mr. J. Tissington's mother passed away Saturday evening March 19, 1927. Mrs. Elizabeth Tissington was in her 74th year. She came to Grande Prairie district in 1912 over the Edson Trail. Mr. Tissington's saw can be heard almost continuously now as farmers are getting anxious about their wood. At the present time he is on Mr. Waterman's place.

Fred Larson and Bud Luckey took a flying trip to Halcourt on Friday afternoon to attend the turkey supper and dance held there.

November 18, 1927 - The Women's Institute met at the home of Mrs. Tissington. A committee was appointed to see Mr. Watson at an early date with reference to a piece of land for a building site (for a community hall).

Pleased to hear Mrs. Henderson has recovered from her illness.

John and Bob Brady are trapping in their old haunts and batching in their old place.

Edgar and Billy Bean are busy hauling wood to town and staying at Hodges.

July 1932 - A basketball game between school girls and young ladies ended in a win for the school girls. The young ladies made a creditable showing considering they hadn't practised.

September - Local ladies met at Mrs. A. Smart's to discuss disposing of a quilt made by the boys and girls. Decision to sell tickets at 10¢ each and proceeds for the annual Christmas tree.

Eisenmans left the district for the time being and are living in town to enable the children to attend school.

School commenced September 6, 1930 Mr. Foy, teacher. Little Jean Eskdale and Billy Carll are the new beginners. Tom Eskdale and Andrew Ross have returned to school after nearly one year's absence due to illness.

May 4, 1933 - Monday saw Sinclairs, Eskdales and Tissingtons on the land plowing and Georges on the J.B. Owens place. In spite of the late spring it is only about four days behind last year. Gerard and Bernard Tissington are cropping the Ray Dillon land this year.

School children received seeds for the School Fair - good luck kiddies!

Mr. and Mrs. John George are now settled on the J.B. Owens property having rented same. J.B. Owens seems to be going in for poultry farming having obtained geese and turkeys at the Conley sale.

Tom Chapman has left this district having rented land near Beaverlodge.

We are pleased to hear Mr. Ferguson is doing well since his trip to Rochester.

Mr. Jim Fletcher is putting Jim Rowland's land in crop this year. Mr. Rowland has resumed work in town at the Frontier Lumber Company.

Mr. Smart is busy breaking on his new farm for a garden.

June 1 - Mr. Watson is busy transplanting his bushes and trees and has just completed planting the trees around Forbes Presbyterian church in Grande Prairie.

July - School closed Friday last and we are pleased to know Miss Foy has been engaged to teach when school opens for the fall term. A portion of the graduating class included:

Grade III - Mary Cameron, Wally Tissington

Grade IV - Mary Ross, George Zahn, Peter Luchak, Violet Luchak

Grade V - Hunter Ross, Betty Conley

Grade VI - Betty Smart, Barbara Smart, Tom Eskdale, Kenneth Tissington

Grade VII - Katherine Zahn

Grade VIII - Emma Zahn, Eva Conley

November - We extend to the family of the late Mrs. Rempel our heartfelt sympathy in their bereavement. Mrs. Rempel resided in Flying Shot for some years, farming on what is now the Zahn farm. She was one of the first members of the Flying Shot Women's Institute and member of the women's auxiliary.

January 4, 1934 - The annual Christmas concert was held under the direction of Mrs. and Miss Foy. All items were ably done and enjoyed by all. After the concert Mr. Waterman and Mr. Smart gave each boy and girl a small present and bag of candy.

February 1 - Church services at Mr. and Mrs. John Watson, Reverend E.A. Wright conducted the service.

Under the heading: Delightful Ski Party: Sunday being a mild day, a party of young people journeyed to the Big Seven to ski on the hills. When skiing was over camp was made and coffee thoroughly enjoyed while various articles of clothing were dried.

April 5, 1934 - The play "Mr. Bob" put on by the young people of Flying Shot was well acted. All who saw the play enjoyed it and the dance which followed.

Last Wednesday evening the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsfield was the scene of a merry and happy surprise party which was sprung on Mr. and Mrs. Ramsfield and daughter, Margaret. Many friends and neighbors gathered to bid them farewell and wish them luck in their new adventure.

We welcome Mr. George Anderson and his housekeeper to the district. He has rented the Ramsfield land.

Orders are coming in to Mr. Watson for nursery stock - currant and gooseberry bushes as well as ornamental bushes. It is well to see Mr. Watson rather than sending out as all his stock is well acclimatized.

July 5, 1934 - During the holidays the school will be renovated. Mr. Smart doing the calcimining.

July 12, 1934 - Excerpts from "Along the Trail" by J. B. Yule entitled 'A Trip Through the Flying Shot Lake District' "Over the weekend, through the courtesy of J.B. Oliver, I visited the Flying Shot Lake district which years ago was inhabited by a tribe of Indians. Not one of them is left; Louis Gouchie, the last of the tribe to live there, left the country around 1925.

On the return trip I was shown the old Indian's trail which led to the lake, which at one point widened out. Here the redmen pitched their tents and held their dances. As we lingered here for some little time I tried to visualize the scene when the Indians occupied this Flying Shot district. Even the trails which they made are fast being obliterated. The redmen have gone from the country never to return, for reason that the whiteman's encroachment is fatal to their existence.

The land in this area was surveyed to suit the Indians and to give them access to the lake, hence many of the surveys are very irregular. The older generation will remember that it was the failure of the Government to meet the request of the Indians in this regard, that caused the rebellion of 1885.

It was a wonderful afternoon and as one J.B. to another J.B. I say thank you for the courtesy and hospitality extended."

October 11, 1934 - Mr. and Mrs. George Howes of Lymburn along with their family of six children are expected to move into their new home this week, having bought the late John Watson place.

Heartfelt sympathy goes to Mrs. Floyd South and Carlin also parents and sisters in the loss of Mr. Floyd South who passed away October 5. Also to the family of the late Mr. John Watson we extend our sympathy.

January 17, 1935 - Annual school meeting at Flying Shot School; Joshua Fletcher read satisfactory reports from teacher, inspector, and trustees. Discussion on digging a well left the matter to the board for a decision. Decision made to continue the School Fair. Mr. Kees Blom awarded the contract for 20 ricks of green poplar wood at $1.35 per rick. Mr. Alex Cameron was returned as trustee.

February, 1935 - Pete Stemplowski has rented the farm of George Duncan.

Some of the graduating classes at Flying Shot school:

Grade VIII - Barbara Smart, Elizabeth Smart

Grade VII - Edith Tissington, Carlin South, James Fletcher, Margaret Carll, Ken Tissington

Grade VI - Mary Ross, George Zahn

Grade V - Allan Howes, Cedric Howes, Violet Luchak, Peter Luchak

Grade IV - James Roland, Mervin Roland, Maisie Sinclair

Grade III - James Tissington

Grade I - Dennis Howell, Dick Sinclair

July 25, 1935 - Quite a number from Flying Shot were seen at Bear Lake last Sunday including Mr. and Mrs. Tom Waterman in their new Chevrolet coupe, also Mr. and Mrs. Havelena, Miss Foy and Miss Tissington.

Flying Shot softball team journeyed to Bear Lake last Sunday and beat Dimsdale 10 to 5. The week before Dimsdale won from Flying Shot 12 to 9. In the evening at Bear Lake these two teams combined and played Grande Prairie losing by one run, 5 to 4.

A barn dance will be held in J.O. Stewart's new barn August 2nd. Prior to the dance W. Sharpe, Social Credit candidate and A.B. Hickok will speak on the issues of the day.

August 22, 1935 - A ball tournament was held at Dimsdale. Flying Shot beat Bridgebank and Dimsdale eliminated Flying Shot 9 to 3. Mr. Havelena was umpire.

Anglican ladies of the Sunday school caravan were welcome guests in the district.

August 22, 1935 - At the recent school board meeting the contract was awarded to Jim Aylesworth to dig a well on the school grounds.

October 31, 1935 - Ladies Social Club formed. Mrs. Foy chaired meeting but declined presidency. Mrs. Howes elected president, Mrs. Tissington vice-president and Mrs. A. Smart sec-treasurer. Ten paid up members.

Flying Shot extends sympathy to the relatives of Peter George in their bereavement.

November 28, 1935 - Masquerade dance a success - prize winners were; Miss Foy as a Turkish lady, Miss Betty Conley, comic and Gerard Tissington, comic.

December 5, 1935 - Mr. Jack Owens laid to rest. He will be sadly missed in this district. He was one of the first settlers here.

January 23, 1936 - The annual ratepayer's meeting in the Flying Shot school. After the reading of various reports a general discussion regarding digging a new well. Mr. Aylesworth had been unable to obtain water where the board had ordered a well dug. It was decided to dig in another place and the contract was awarded to Mr. Hugel. Jim Aylesworth was given the wood contract.

Mrs. Tom Waterman was re-elected to the board of trustees.

April 16, 1936 - Mr. Hugel has been successful in locating water on the school grounds.

A jolly evening was held recently with varied entertainment. Misses Barbara Smart, Olwen Griffiths, Margaret Griffiths and Katie Zahn sang 'The Isle of Capri'. Margaret Griffiths delighted the audience with a solo called 'Land of Roses'. Dancing to mouth organs played by Mrs. Bill Bean and Joe Zahn followed the program.

June 11, 1936 - Mr. Archie Smart is occupied with his job as census taker in Millarston, Dimsdale and north Bear Lake districts.

June 25, 1936 - Formed - W.M.S. auxiliary of the Presbyterian Church. Officers were: Mrs. Robert Mitchell - honorary president, Mrs. Jim Tissington - president, Mrs. George Howes - vice-president, Mrs. Alex Cameron - sec-treasurer.

August 6, 1936 - Special school board meeting at which Miss Betty Goddard of Grande Prairie was engaged as teacher.

The Women's Social Club met to make final arrangement for picnic and dance. After the business Mrs. Cameron and Mrs. Bean assisted by Mary Cameron and Edith Tissington put on a silent play called 'Wanted a Husband'. This produced gales of laughter. We were glad to welcome Mrs. Kees Blom and trust she will be a regular attendant.

The W.A. will meet at the home of Mrs. Robert Cameron.

Service at St. Barnabas - last Sunday evening Reverend A.F. Ledieu conducted services here.

Betty Smart and Kenneth Tissington returned from an enjoyable ten days at Vermilion, attending a short course there. Ken won alfalfa seed, a prize for wheat judging. They also had the pleasure of hearing Premier Aberhart.

November 13, 1936 - Women's Social Club held their meeting. They sincerely regret the leaving of Mrs. Joyce Cameron and son Duncan.

December 10, 1936 - Masquerade dance with Penson and Robertson orchestra. Mrs. Eskdale and Mrs. Ross were delegated to do the buying and superintending of the Christmas cheer for the children this year.

January 14, 1937 - W.S.C. will hold a variety night, Mrs. Howes and Miss Goddard are to put on a Robbie Burns' night. Spring Creek Miners dance, admission 25¢. Penson's orchestra.

April 8, 1937 - Good crowd turned out to dance with Stewart orchestra in attendance.

Men folk of the district are finding the hauling of potatoes tough. Several hundred bushels are going out of this area.

June 10, 1937 - Mr. Tom Waterman and Jim Tissington are district representatives at the Legion smoker in Grande Prairie.

July 8, 1937 - The ball team journeyed to the ground of Mr. Dunc Bain where they met the Wapiti Wood Ticks in a return game. Flying Shot won both games.

September 9, 1937 - School commenced with Mr. Roy Hughson as teacher.

October 21, 1937 - Mrs. Fisher organized a Mission Band at the school. Allan Howes president, Jean Howell secretary, Mary Ross vice-president, Donna Owens sec-treasurer and Mr. Hughson leader. Meetings are every two weeks the last 30 minutes of Friday afternoon. Named - The Agnes Forbes Band, they are interdenominational.

December 9, 1937 - Mrs. Reg Stubbs welcomed to the district and to the Social Club. Wednesday men of the district met at the hall to build a barn for the horses. The women were on hand to serve dinner.

January 13, 1938 - The young people of Flying Shot are forming a dramatic club.

March 24, 1938 - Flying Shot dramatic club presented the play "Where's Grandma?" the cast included Mr. and Mrs. Hughson, Miss Emma Zahn, Mary and Violet Luchak, Jean Howell, Margaret Carll, Messrs. Tom Eskdale and Joe Zahn.

April 27, 1938 - Mrs. Howes entertained the Social Club with 'The Highwayman' and 'That Egg'. Great credit is due Mrs. Howes for her delightful entertainment.

June 9, 1938 - A clinic has been arranged for children six and under. Mrs. T. Lawlor will be in charge with Mrs. G. Tissington assisting.

Army cutworms are working havoc in the area.

August 11, 1938 - A dance will be held to raise funds for M.P.H.A. (Monkman Pass Highway Association).

December 8, 1938 - "The Black Cats" proved a very enjoyable play. Katie the maid portrayed by Jean Howell, Margie and Henry Burkett played by Mr. and Mrs. Hughson. Henry's college chum Dexter enacted by Tom Eskdale, Mrs. Crane (the mother-in-law) was played by Edith Tissington. Sue Jarvic by Margaret Carll, Amos the handyman by Karl Zahn, Donna Owens played Lorett Day, Andrew Ross was Detective Steele and Jack Laverick as Hiram Hannibal.

February 2, 1939 - Officers of Agnes Forbes Mission Band: President - Lloyd Finch, Vice-president - Billy Carll, Sec-treasurer - Jimmy Tissington.

July 27, 1939 - Following the whist drive, dancing was enjoyed - Herb George supplying the music.

On Friday last Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson, old timers of the district, spent the day with Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mitchell. The occasion took the form of birthday celebrations - Mrs. Mitchell three score and ten, Mr. Ferguson passing his four score. Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson now reside in Bellingham, Washington, having rented their farm to Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar.

December 21, 1939 - The Dramatic Club of Flying Shot has decided to take their play to Bezanson.

January 11, 1940 - Annual school concert a great success. 62 pair of mitts were handed out to children under ten through the kindness of Mr. Jim Aylesworth. The school children presented Mr. and Mrs. Miller with a gift.

August 22, 1940 - Mr. and Mrs. Albert Partlow have moved into their fine new residence here in Flying Shot.

September 2, 1940 - School fair sponsored by W.S.C. for children six to nine years. Mrs. A. Partlow and Miss Elizabeth Smart were judges.

December, 1941 - Flying Shot W.M.S. packed nine boxes of homemade cakes, cookies and candy for local boys overseas.

June 18, 1942 - Mr. M. Larsen of Poplar Hill is laying the foundation for Mrs. Luckey's new barn. Mrs. Luckey and Mrs. Massee hauled sand from Bear Lake.

October 15, 1942 - In the last four months Flying Shot has lost three of its oldest residents; Mrs. John Watson, Robert Eskdale and Robert Mitchell all at the age of 82 years.

February 11, 1943 - Flying Shot Social Club had Mrs. Cameron make two crocheted centre pieces, one to be raffled at Dimsdale for the Red Cross and the other for the local boys overseas parcels. It was also decided to

send 300 cigarettes to boys overseas as well as parcels for Easter.

July 8, 1948 - Stan Hambly and Stan Fenton are out looking over the school district in preparations for moving the school.

November 8, 1948 - Mr. and Mrs. Zahn have sold their land and will move to Kelowna, B.C.

June 1949 - Reverend Allan Howes who was visiting his parents here has returned to his parish at Lac La Biche.

September, 1949 - Mrs. L. Rimbey will be taking the school for the coming year.

Lloyd and Leslie Head with their dog team were seen in the parade at the opening of the bridge at the Smoky River.

February 22, 1951 - Charlie Smart left for Cornwallis, Nova Scotia where he is joining the Navy.

April 26, 1951 - Gordon Sinclair is busy hauling the school wood.

June 7, 1951 - Mr. Hamm of Wembley brought his collection of stuffed birds to the Flying Shot school and gave the children an interesting talk.

Ladies of the district held a tea to honor Mrs. Fredette, who leaves shortly to join her daughter in Quebec. Mr. Fredette was our local veterinarian.

January 24, 1952 - Ladies club donated raffle money to the hospital wheel chair fund.

April 22, 1952 - We welcome new Dutch family Mr. and Mrs. Boonstra, who moved to the Oliver farm.

April, 1952 - Bull association held their annual meeting at the school. Business of the year attended to, Mr. John Popowich, Gerard Tissington and Bud Luckey will be caretakers of the bulls this year.

December 11, 1952 - The Eskdales and the Ross family have taken up at the saw mill for the winter months. We are glad to report Alex Cameron is out of the hospital after a bad leg injury at the mill.

Haying



First push off stacker in the district on George Stoll's farm.



Dan Willsey and Joe Montgomery with a load of straw.



Bill Head mowing hay.

Cutting Ice



Dan Willsey and Seb Schmidt cutting ice on Bowman Lake.



Albert Partlow cutting ice on Flying Shot Lake in 1930's.



Ted Rintoul and Eric Partlow hauling ice from Flying Shot Lake 1930's.



Ice cutting machine on Wapiti.



Cutting ice on the Wapiti and loading it into a truck.

Chapter 6: Grovedale



The Bridge Creek School

by Charlie Penson and Jackie Connell

The need for a school in the Bridge Creek area was felt by the families living there, who had 20 or more school children attending the Grovedale School. This was up to five miles away over roads little better than trails.

In 1950 these families asked the Department of Education for their own school. J.R. Stan Hambley, Superintendent of Schools was a great help, assisting in negotiations with government officials in Edmonton, who didn't understand special needs and circumstances involved by settlers in isolated areas.

However, the local people were able to get permission and the fall term of school, September, 1951, was started in Bridge Creek School, #4984, and finishing work was completed inside during the winter.

Mr. J. Blanchette had offered a corner of his land for the school. Superintendent Hambley was appointed official trustee. Miss Ethel Hawkes of Dimsdale was the supervisor for the first term. Mrs. Shirley Penson supervised from September until Christmas, and was followed by Margaret Courtney who died tragically in a fire at the teacherage during a severe cold spell. Mr. Mike Senciw completed the term. Miss Rita McGhan taught the 1953-54 term. She was followed by Cal Salmon for the 1954-55, and 1955-56 term also. Mrs. Frank Lockwood taught the 1957-58 term, then Mr. Gerry taught from September 1958 to June, 1960. The last term in this school was taught by Mrs. D. Watt, who started the term at Bridge Creek and completed it at Grovedale.

Some of the other things that stand out of these precious memories are: the spelling bees, field trips, valentine box socials, hot soup or hot chocolate made over the big pot-bellied wood heater in the winter, the apprehension of the school inspector's visit.

Some of the school children who passed through the doors of Bridge Creek School include: Ron and Annette Grubert, Clara, Mary-Jean, Joseph, and Laurette Blanchette, Lyle, Norine, Madeline, Charlie, Jackie, Marlene, Gwen and Sandra Penson, Glenda, Charlene and Colleen Head, Pat, Bill and Bob Conley, Madeline, Dan, Marie, and Albert Campbell, Ernest and Clara Campbell, Lloyd, Jean, Howard, and Gerald Chalifoux, Ann Chase, and the Gerry children.

Grovedale School

by Dorothy Comeau

The first correspondence on a school was on May 28, 1940. At that time a petition was sent in to the Department of Education requesting a school district be formed. A committee had been set up, consisting of A.R. Olson, M. Mellon, and Mrs. J.H. McFadden. In June, 1940, the



Grovedale School, 1956.
Dale Smith, Pender Smith, Jim Sundberg, Dennis McAusland, Larry Smith, Don Tate, Ron Olson, Marvin Miller, Roy McAusland, Teacher, Mrs. Sundberg.

Inspector of Schools visited the area and discussed the proposed district with the committee. In his report to the Department of Education he said, quote, "There are no roads worth mentioning in the vicinity; the people are very poor - poor farming equipment, farming area would not exceed 500 acres. There is nothing to indicate that these people will stay permanently." End of quote. A temporary school was suggested as there was eight children of school age.

After a lapse of two years, the question again came up. A meeting was held at the Pender Smith home, but it wasn't until 1944 that the school was started. It was not ready by the 1st of September. However, Allan Wardill gave permission to use his cabin temporarily. So school commenced in January, 1945 with Frank Thompson as teacher, and a very good one, in spite of it being his first school. I believe about 14 children attended. The cabin was small and crowded, and it was under difficult conditions that many of these children began school for the first time. However, by the time that the new school was ready, they had progressed so well that a concert held at that time was a complete surprise to all.

There was even a "Gay Nineties" Revue, complete with appropriate costumes, painstakingly made out of crepe paper by the mothers.

Mr. Thompson did not return in the autumn, and school opened with Mrs. Vera Gabler supervising. Miss Aleda Stoll soon followed Mrs. Gabler. Miss Stoll married Duncan Bain Jr. Miss Elinor Bulford (now Mrs. George Bain) was the next teacher, for the 1946-47 term. The next school year started with a supervisor, Miss Olive Gerow of South Wapiti. She was followed by Mrs. Gorrie, who was succeeded by Miss Glendenning, who completed the term.

In September, 1948, Mr. J.L. McIntosh of Dimsdale occupied the newly-built teacherage. He taught until the end of June, 1953. There were more children now, as many as nine grades in one room.

The fall term, 1953, began with Mrs. Charlotte Olson supervising until April 30th, and Miss Verna Lucky of Dimsdale completed the term. Mr. J.L. McIntosh returned to teach from September 1954 to June 1957. Then came Miss Dorothy Hove, Mrs. M. Sundberg, and Mrs. H. Barker.

A new two room school was now in use. The Bridge Creek school was moved to South Wapiti for the Elk District students, and Bridge Creek students were attending the new Grovedale school. This was the 1960-61 term, and Mrs. D. Watt, who started the term at Bridge Creek, completed it at Grovedale. Mrs. Barker was the principal.



Grovedale School Children 1945 or 1946 with Inspector Johnston.



Grovedale School Children 1958.

For the 1961-62 term, the old school (which had been sold to the Community Club) was again in use as a classroom. Mrs. Barker, Mrs. Duperron, and Mrs. Bellknap were the staff. These three taught again the following term, with Mrs. Roberts taking Mrs. Bellknaps place for a time.

Still more space was needed, and in 1963, the former Bridge Creek school was moved again, this time to Grovedale. This made four classrooms, with Mrs. Barker, Mrs. Duperron, Mrs. Bellknap, and Mrs. Neufeld. For the 1964-65 term the teaching consisted of Mrs. Duperron, Mrs. Levesque, Mrs. Neufeld and Mr. Wiebe. The following term saw Mrs. Duperron, Mrs. Richards, Mr. and Mrs. Greenlaw, and the same for the next term.

Meanwhile, an impressive new addition was being built on to the two-room structure. In September, 1967, it was completed and opened with Mrs. Duperron as principal, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Greenlaw and Mr. Johnson. The school was named the Penson Elementary School in honor of J.C. Penson, who had been Secretary-treasurer of the school board for many years.

At the present time, 1980, there are 105 pupils in the Penson school, as compared to 77 last year. Students are brought from South Wapiti by bus. There are four buses in operation — two of these transport pupils from Grade seven to 12, to schools in Grande Prairie. There are three portables in use; one is for the kindergarten children, one a library, and the third, a classroom.

A long-time member of the school board, Mr. Percy Smith, is to be commended for over 30 years service.

The Grovedale Community Club

This club has been in operation since, at least, 1945. It was then called the Ladies Club, and meetings were held on the first Wednesday of each month, in the members' homes. These meetings not only took care of the business of the club, but afforded the women of the district a chance to get together and visit. Some didn't get out much in those days, and the meetings were enjoyed immensely.

The most important objective at the start was to see that there was a Christmas tree with gifts and candy bags for each child in the district. A concert was put on by the teachers and pupils, and there were some very good ones. Mr. J. L. McIntosh was an expert in this field.

The school house was used for dances and not being very big, was often crowded. A hall fund was started in the late 1940's and in 1950, a piano was bought from Mr. and Mrs. P. Thetrault. This piano is still being used in the hall.

New settlers were moving in, and more school rooms were needed so a two room school was built. In 1962, the club was able to buy the old building for a nominal sum. However, funds were still lacking to enlarge the building. It was again used as a classroom, as more children reached school age. This was helpful to the club as the building was wired when power was brought to Grovedale.

In the spring and summer of 1965, the men of the district poured the cement foundation for the addition. This was all volunteer labour. Material was bought and financed on a three year plan, and building was started. It was mostly confined to weekends, when the men were available.

A drive was on to sell shares in the hall, and response was very good. Somehow, after many suppers, dances, quilt raffles, and other fund raising events, the hall was officially opened on New Years Eve, 1965. Much credit is given to the men and women who gave their time and work to achieve this goal.

The club changed its name to the Grovedale Community Club when it bought the old school building. More money was needed to install panic locks on the door, and with a payment to meet each month, raffles, etc. had to continue. The Club obtained an Entertainment License in the summer of 1967.

A kitchen was added on in 1973 and served the purpose until the area outgrew the facilities.

Groundwork on a new recreation complex started that same year. After many hours of planning, feasibility studies, master plan surveys and meetings, the cement for the new hall was poured in the spring of 1977.

That summer was a busy one for the people of the area as the hall took shape.

It officially opened on October 14, 1977. The new building is 100' x 50' and as well as containing the hall, also has a roomy kitchen, senior citizen's room and an arts and crafts room.

Meanwhile, in 1976, the club members decided to form an Agricultural Society which would assist them in their projects, and an application was prepared, dated December 6, 1976.

At the official opening of the hall, the President accepted the Society's Charter, making us No. 207 in the province.

The original Community Club still exists and works jointly with the Agricultural Society.

The Grovedale Community Baptist Church

In the spring of 1970, Reverend and Mrs. From and family of Louisiana, moved to the former Monty Mellon farm in Grovedale. He was appointed new superintendent of Atlantic Richfield gas plant located at Gold Creek.

After visiting and inquiring of many families in Grovedale and South Wapiti, enough interest was shown that a community Sunday School was established.

The first Sunday School was held in Penson Elementary School in the fall of 1970, with the help of Grande Prairie McLaurin Baptist School teachers. The next year, the Sunday School was moved to the old Grovedale Community Hall, until we decided that thre was a real need for our own church. Attendance was increasing at an encouraging rate.

Shortly after that, in the fall of 1971, it was learned that the former ski chalet, located at the base of Wapiti Hill, by the bridge, was up for bid. A bid was put forward and was accepted by the Ski Club and we were able to purchase the building from enough cash donations obtained from various sources.

With permission from Percy Smith, we were able to move the building onto a piece of his property located one and a half miles north of the Grovedale store, for this we were very grateful.

With a growing attendance, and children so enthusiastic, we felt a need for a Sunday School bus. One was purchased from the County of Grande Prairie in June, 1971.

Enough interest was shown that a young people's club and Bible study was formed. Many enjoyable times were had during skating parties, camp-outs, weiner roasts, sing-songs around camp fires.

We enjoyed the service and dedication of Mr. From and his family until they were transferred to Anchorage, Alaska in the fall of 1973.

With the help of Mr. From, we were introduced to Rev. George Cooper, who visited our community, and with his wife, decided to move to Grande Prairie from Mt. Baker, Washington.

Rev. George Cooper and his wife served us until Mrs. Cooper's ill health forced them to regretfully move back to Washington in the fall of 1975.

During a short absence without a pastor, the Worsley Baptist Church continued to give us moral support and finally notified us of a family who were willing to help serve us in our community.

In June, 1976, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Hagen and family were able to fill the vacancy and are still holding church services.

The J. Blanchette Family

by Dorothy Comeau

Before coming to the Grande Prairie area, Joe Blanchette worked at Legal, Westlock and Clyde. The family, consisting of Joe, his wife Josephine, daughters Clara and Mary Jean, then moved to Grande Prairie where Joe worked on the Joe Tissington farm for a number of years.

In September, 1938, a son, Joseph was born, and two months later the family moved to the Waling Quarter in the Bridge Creek area. About that time, Joe and Josephine had filed on the S½ 20-69-6-W6. The trip to the Waling place was pretty bad. The weather the day before was pleasant, but moving day, in November, was a blizzard. They had to ford the river. The road was very bad, and the trip was made with horses and wagon. When they reached Karl Grubert's home, Mrs. Grubert had



Mr. and Mrs. Blanchette, Clara, Mary-Jean and Joseph.

prepared supper for them, but as it was only a mile and a half further, they went on. Mrs. Blanchette was so anxious to get to the end of the trip, and get it over with.

There was a new road being built, which made travelling much easier and quicker. The Old Bridge Creek trail, winding across the school section, Vernie Connor's land and the muskeg, past the "Grandfather Tree", a lightning split cottonwood, was seldom used now. I don't know who gave the tree this name, but it sure stuck, and anyone who travelled this road would remember it.

In June, 1944, another daughter, Laurette, was added to the family, and two years later the family left the Waling quarter, and moved to their homestead.

The children were growing up, getting married and moving away, and finally in July, 1975, Joe and Josephine left their farm and moved into Aurora Court in Grande Prairie. Their son, Joseph, now has the farm, but does not live there. He and his wife Margaret live in Winterburn. They have two daughters, Brenda and Elaine, and one son, Kevin.

Their daughter Clara and husband Frank McLeod live in Grovedale. They have one daughter, Delores, and three sons, Johnny, Randy and Edward.

Daughter Mary Jean and husband Leonard Heikel, their daughters Jeanette and Charlotte, and one son, Neil live in Edmonton.

Daughter Laurette and husband Floyd Mayer live near Clairmont. They have one daughter, Wanda, and one son, Wayne.

Joe and Josephine also have three great-granddaughters at this time of writing. On June 15th, Fathers' Day, their first great-grandson was born in Edmonton. He is the son of John and Debbie McLeod.



Laurette Blanchette at the homestead.

P.C. Comeau Family

by Dorothy Comeau

My husband and I came from southern B.C. I arrived in Grande Prairie with two small boys in October, 1929, and Pete came in February, 1930. In March he went south of the Wapiti River, trapping on Bald Mountain Creek with my brothers, Jack and Charlie Penson. This was his first trip through what is now Grovedale. There was only a few families there then.

This was the depression, and there were few jobs to be had. Later that spring, he fought fire at Nose Creek under Ranger Tommy Foote. Mr. Huggard was Timber Inspector at the time. In 1933, there was a fire in the Big Mountain timber, and he fought fire under Ranger Gurth O'Brien. In May, 1934, he became a Fire Ranger under Timber Inspector Donald Buck, and his district, 24 East, included Grovedale and south to the 16th baseline. This was seasonal employment, commencing May 1st and ending on October 31st. Winters, he trapped.



Pete Comeau & Ray Smuland (1956 or 57).

Horses were a must in those days, and it was difficult keeping them in town. In June, 1939, the family moved to Bridge Creek. We lived about one mile west of Carl Deffner for six years. In 1942, the Rangers were issued two-way radios, which greatly speeded up fire detection, and suppression.

Roads were now being built into timber berths in the Big Mountain area, and about this time the Ross Lumber Company started operating there. This operation was later taken over by Grande Prairie Lumber Company, and is now under North Canadian Forest Industries Ltd.

Bald Mountain Tower was the first lookout tower built in this district. Kakwa Tower followed. Many Forestry cabins were built. Pete helped in the building of many of these, including Big Mountain Creek cabin, Disaster Creek (now gone), Cutbank, Musreau Lake, and many in other districts. These cabins were used as stop-overs by Forestry personnel.

In the early 1950's, Bald Mountain timber was opened up. R.G. Davis set up a sawmill there. A road had been cleared in 1949, and in 1950 by the Forest service. Mr. Ted Hammer was Superintendent at that time. Pete continued in the Forest service until 1963, when he retired.

We could not get title to the quarter section we were on, as it was not surveyed, so in the spring of 1945, we applied for an agricultural homestead lease on E½-32-69-6-W6, which was vacant. In September of that year we moved from Bridge Creek, and lived in a small cabin built by Harry Palmer. Later, we built on to it, and still later, built a new house, which we are still in.

In 1968, Pete became a Supervisor for the Junior Forest Ranger program, and I cooked for them. We both enjoyed working with this program, spending four summers with the boys. Camps were at the Cutbank River, Two Lakes, Simmonette River, Chinook Ridge and other

areas. We were unable to continue after 1971, due to Pete's failing health, and in 1972, he passed away.

The family of two girls and four boys are mostly living in Grovedale. Joan (Mrs. Dennis Howell), Phil, Reg and Fred reside here - Arline (Mrs. Clayton O'Connell) lives with her husband and family in Salmon Arm, B.C., and Peter and his wife, Verna, are at present in Louisiana, United States.

The Gabler Family

by Clarence Gabler

My version of the following remembrances may be different from my parents, William and Mary Gabler, had they been around, but I shall endeavour to mention some of the events of our first years in Grovedale - the area south of Grande Prairie across the Wapiti River.

Our original home was Buchanan, Saskatchewan, and the province was badly hit by drought during the 1920's. Farmers were seeking greener pastures, so to speak, in which to settle. A Mr. Abrahamson who had farmed near us at Buchanan, and who had moved to a farm at Bear Lake, near Grande Prairie, spoke to Dad about the Peace River district and the Grande Prairie area in particular while he was visiting his relatives.

Dad had a family of three by his first wife who had passed away, and Mother had a family of five from her first marriage. Her husband was also deceased. I was their first born, followed by my sister Vi, and brother Cyril.

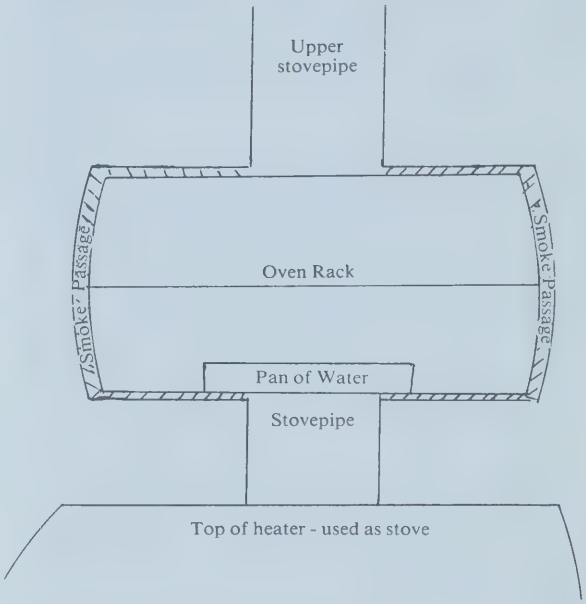
It was December 20th, 1928, when we arrived in Grande Prairie and spent one or two nights at the Old Immigration Hall near the N.A.R. station. During this time Dad met Jack Haan, who had a ranch on the south side of the Wapiti River, and Mr. Haan told Dad about a log cabin across the river which was being used by two trappers.

On the morning of December 22nd, we all set out with Ray Lott, a teamster from Grande Prairie who was hired by Dad to take us to that vast area across the Wapiti. Our destination was that log cabin on the east side of Joachim's Ridge, approximately twenty-five miles from Grande Prairie.



William & Mary Gabler, 1930 in front of their cabin which was built in 1929.

Vi remembers that it took her and Mother at least a day to scrape mud, etc. from the floor so that the boards could be seen. After the scrubbing they turned out almost white. The cabin was all clean and the curtains hung at the windows by Christmas Eve. Mother and Dad had bought an airtight heater with a stovepipe oven for cooking on. A pan of water was kept in the oven during any time baking was being done so that the bread, or whatever, would not burn. Please refer to the rough sketch below as I am sure that some readers would not understand how the stove and oven was constructed.



Some of the trapline was to the north and west of the cabin and this is when Dad saw the area which years later was to become Grovedale. We did not see this part of the country on the way out from Grande Prairie as we were too far east.

The Campbell family lived at the west end of the ridge and we saw Pete, Johnny and Baptiste, several times during the winter. Our only other visitor was Cap Bradley who operated a sort of dairy along the Smoky River further to the south. He was from England.

Dad applied to the Government for a squatter's permit but this type of permit was no longer being issued. We were allowed to remain there, however, as there was nothing in the Public Lands Act to prevent us from doing so.

About the time the line was being cut my parents put a notice in the Free Press describing the country south of the Wapiti River, mentioning in particular how green everything was and how light the brush was also, in fact that there were many open areas. It was only a short while later that we received letters from across the prairies but Mother was only able to reply to the people who had enclosed stamped self-addressed envelopes. The postal employee in Grande Prairie asked if we were starting a mail route of our own as at one pickup we had received a gunny sack of mail. This had to be packed back to Grovedale, as well as our other supplies, on our backs. In fact I had to buy another sack for the groceries. Cyril had this job to do most of the time as the rest of us were busy with the building of the cabins.

It was around this time that a ferry was put into operation at the site where the bridge now stands, and a road

was built up the hill on each side of the Wapiti. All the settlers worked on the road making, free gratis.

On November 19th, 1942, I enlisted with the Canadian Army and spent most of the next two and one-half years stationed at various army camps in Alberta. During basic training at North Bay, Ontario, I suffered a great deal from sinus trouble and was ordered back to Alberta.

In January, 1943, while I was in North Bay, I received word that my Father had passed away very suddenly at the age of 75 years. I was unable to attend his funeral as the weather conditions made it impossible. Cyril and Irene were still with my parents at this time. Dad had lumber piled in the yard at the time of his death for a new home for himself and Mother, but when it was finished, Mother moved into it all alone. It was built just a short distance west of the cabin. Cyril and Irene lived in the cabin for the next year or two.

While I was stationed in Edmonton in 1944 I met Verah Smith and we were married on April 2nd, 1945. I had just been granted two months spring leave from the army in order to do spring work and seed a crop. During this time the war in Europe came to an end and I was immediately given further leave until September when I was ordered to report to Calgary Headquarters for discharge.

My Father had wished me to have his quarter of land, and after Mother applied for title in the name of the estate, the land was transferred to me. In 1946 I filed for a Veteran Homestead Lease on the NE 4-70-6-W6. Filing as a veteran I received a grant of $2320 with which to clear and break land, buy machinery or stock or materials for building a home. I had clearing and breaking done, approximately 50 acres, bought some machinery, a cow, and lumber for a house. I did, however, have to farm the land for ten years before I could earn the title and have it released to me.

Our five children were born during these years. Darlene was born June 13th, 1946, Bill, May 22nd, 1947, David, December 31st, 1950, Wayne, February 26th, 1953, and Dorothy, December 8th, 1956.

Church services were also held at the school from time to time. Darlene and Bill were baptised, along with other children, by the Anglican Church rector from Grande Prairie, in 1947. David and Wayne were baptised in September, 1953, by the United Church minister, also from Grande Prairie.

Mother left Grovedale about the time Cyril left. Her house was moved to a lot in Grande Prairie but she did not stay in it very long but moved into Pioneer Lodge, the first home for Senior Citizens in Grande Prairie. In 1958 she became ill and Joyce Flynn (nee Murray) who was living in Grande Prairie took her into her home to care for her. She died there in December, 1958.

I remained at Grovedale until March, 1957, when we sold our land to Percy and Walter Smith. We moved onto a farm near Dimsdale until November, 1959, when we bought a home in Grande Prairie. We sold the farm a couple of years later. It is very likely we will remain in Grande Prairie but we almost made it back to Grovedale in 1978 but not to farm.

Karl Grubert Family

by Annette Day (daughter)

Karl Grubert first came to the Grovedale area in the late fall of 1930. He, Mr. Graham and Percy Smith put up hay for the Gablers, who had settled in the district in 1929. Mr. Gabler and his son, Clarence, helped Dad build a log house on his land in the Bridge Creek area. He later bought several horses and a new Massey Harris wagon. Gradually, other necessary pieces of machinery were purchased.

In the fall of 1934, my mother and her mother came from Saskatchewan. My grandmother (Mrs. Judkins) settled on land just north of the Grubert homestead.

Mother was a healthy and ambitious young wife and worked hard along with Dad in making a home and farm out of the land they acquired. Three years later she gave birth, at home, to a son, Ronald. Mrs. Pender Smith was the mid-wife. Two years later I was born. I was two months premature and had to spend a long time in hospital before I could be taken home.

When my brother and I were school age, we rode horseback for the spring and fall months. Several families (Pensons, Blanchettes and us) in our area, travelled together with horses and sleigh during the winter months. School was about five miles away and on very cold days we often suffered frostbite on face, hands and feet. Our mothers would heat rocks in the oven and wrap them in blankets. The rocks held the heat for quite a while and we would keep our feet on them to keep warm. However, often the roads would be badly drifted and we children would have to get out and break trail for the horses and sleigh. This, of course, meant extra time spent on the road and as a result the rocks would be cold long before we arrived at school.

In 1940, Dad joined the army and served in the military police force. (Since Mom needed help with farm while Dad was away, Tom Holmes was hired). I can remember the excitement we all felt when Dad was able to come home on leave. Time would pass all too quickly and soon Dad would have to go back to Army Base. We had a black mare that Dad would ride into Grande Prairie and then turn loose. She would come back home on her own, saddle and bridle still in place. In 1945, it was announced the war was over and the men were able to return home. What a happy day for us and everyone else in our area that had members of their families in the army.

Dad entered many County Fairs held in Grande Prairie and received many ribbons for his Hereford stock. I would help with the preparation and showing of the animals.

In 1955, Dad obtained a grazing lease on the Smoky River where he ran his cattle during the summer months.

This lease area was once inhabited by a Cap Bradley, who had come from England about 1923 and started a dairy operation there. He built a big house, with hardwood floors, and a veranda on two sides, and also several other out buildings. He shipped his cream, etc., to Grande Prairie via the Smoky and Wapiti River. He left in 1929 and it is not known what happened to him after that time.

In 1961, Dad started a 4-H Beef Club in Grovedale which included children from Grovedale and the South Wapiti area. When he sold his farm to Mrs. Alward in 1966, Dennis McIntosh took over the 4-H leadership.

In 1957, my brother Ron married Lilian Kapusta of Grande Prairie and in 1962 they took up farming on a quarter section of land east of the Grovedale Store (the former Cyril Gabler place). They have four children, all girls. The oldest daughter is married and has a son.

I was married in 1959 to George Day of South Wapiti, Alberta. We have lived on the Day farm since that time and have four children, two boys and two girls.

Dad and Mom are living in Salmon Arm, B.C. where Dad keeps busy gardening and feeding a few beef calves through the summer. They enjoy living there as people are friendly, the winters are quite mild and summers usually sunny and warm.

Sherman and Betty Head

Sherman Head married Betty Conley in 1939. They lived in the Grande Prairie area and had three daughters, Glenda, Charlene and Colleen.

Glenda married Al Romanow. They live in Calgary and have three children, Douglas, Carrol and Brian.

Charlene married Jack Durrant and they live in Grande Prairie and have three children, David, Rodney and Roxanne.

Colleen married Brian McLaughlin. They live in Grande Prairie and have three children, Bradley, Reid and Monty.

In 1946, Sherman filed on a half section of land in the Grovedale area, where he lived until 1974, when he passed away due to a farm accident.

Betty still lives in Grovedale.

The Hickey Family

Jim and I decided to come north in April of 1955. We had no idea where we would go after we visited our respective parents except that it would be somewhere north.

While we were at my parents at Alberta Beach, my brother, Ross Davis and his wife, Gwen, also arrived.

During the next few days Jim and Ross talked a lot of logging and summer work for the Forestry. As a result, we came with them to Grovedale when they came home. Ross needed a catskinner and Jim needed a job.

Mom and Dad gave us a cookstove, a bed and some extra bedding. With the household goods we already had and the addition of a second hand washing machine we bought in Edmonton, that poor old one ton Mercury was almost groaning. We left Edmonton May 2, 1955 and spent that night in High Prairie. The highway was good and we got to Grande Prairie at noon the next day. We had dinner there and then began the last lap of our trip. We didn't know it then, but it was to be many years before we went back south, and then only to visit.

Spring was very late that year and we crossed the Wapiti River on the winter ice and slab bridge. When we got to the river, Bill and Jenny Naharniak were ahead of us. They had just bought a Shorthorn cow, Ruby and her two daughters, Whiteface and Spotty.

Ross had a shack in the yard he used for storage. He and Jim emptied it out and we moved in the next day. It was fun turning it into a snug little home. I grew up on a bush homestead west of Edmonton, and after four years on the naked prairie south of Calgary it was nice to get back in the bush.

Jim and Ross had to do some overhauling on the cats and when that was done, they started breaking on Ross's homestead. I don't remember how many acres, but it was a nice sized field.

Also that summer they did quite a bit of road work for the Forestry, a lot of it down the Kakwa road at the Cutbank.

When we came here we had no intentions of homesteading. Jim was just going to work for Ross for a while and who knew where we would go from there. However, Ross talked us into filing on the old Wardill place, NE 19-69-6-W6, and the quarter joining it on the east.

On November 15 we moved to Ross's camp on Bald Mountain Creek. He had been sawing for Imperial Lumber at Slave Lake for several years but had moved to the Bald Mountain berth in 1952. I believe his was the first mill in that immediate area.

Such a beautiful place. We really enjoyed our few months in camp. It was noisy, as the mill was double shifting, but even the noise couldn't spoil our pleasure in the big old spruce and the dozens of squirrels racing up and down them, and the friendly and always hungry Whiskey Jacks. Deer and moose were sighted almost every day. I wonder where a person would have to go today to duplicate those surroundings? I know it is still lovely on Bald Mountain but I doubt there is anywhere near as much game.

Spring breakup came and on March 23, 1956 we moved to the Wardill quarter. We hadn't heard from the land ofice but we moved in anyway. There were several well built log buildings, barn, chicken house, wood shed and a 20 x 20 house which had a 12 x 12 kitchen and two 8 x 10 bedrooms. There was a small pantry in the corner of the kitchen with dozens of lidless, empty jam cans and pounds of mouse droppings. Kenny and I started packing junk out and Jim went to the store for soap, lye and a good stiff scrub brush. Mrs. Thetrault didn't have a brush in stock so sent her own. We should have bought her a new one because hers had certainly aged a lot by the time it went back.

We finally heard from the land office. They said the half we had filed on was too heavily timbered for homesteading. However, we could rent the NE of 19 and file on the SE of 30, directly north.

One day in May, Jim and Ross went into Grande Prairie, and for some reason they went to the Burns stockyard. There was a part Guernsey heifer, two years old and with her first calf. Jim didn't think she would give enough milk for us and her calf. So he bought her without the calf for $100. One of our best buys. She gave us all the milk and butter we could use.

We got a few old cluckers from Jenny and a bunch of setting eggs. Most of the eggs hatched and we had about 50 chickens.

Instead of cash wages from Ross that summer, Jim got paid by using Ross's cat and machinery to open up and get ready 65 acres to crop the next spring.



Jim Hickey.

That fall we had our third baby and luckily this one was a girl, Kathleen. Norine and Jack Arlint had their first. A fine boy, Keith.

In 1957 we planted our first crop, 65 acres of oats. Hard frost was early and they weren't good for anything but cow feed. So there we were with thousands of bundles and only one cow and a steer calf. Also the fall was wet and we couldn't stack anything.

Mr. Grubert, a farmer southwest of us, heard all about our feed. He was short of feed, so he made a deal with Jim to take 12 cows for five years on half shares. That gave us a start in good registered Herefords. The first yearling bull we showed at the annual Bull Sale took second in a class of 35 animals.

We had Mr. Penson's team, Pat and Minnie, at our place that winter after our first crop. We could use them for wintering them. Jim hauled all those bundles in with the team and wagon. He would just throw them off and I'd stook a load while he was gone for the next.

One morning in the summer of 1957 I heard the boys yelling out behind the house. The dog came skidding around the corner, through the door and under the couch. I went out to see what was going on. They both had sticks and were after a bear cub. I yanked them into the house and asked them what they thought they were doing. Davy Crockett was their favorite song and they figured if he could kill a bear when he was only three, so could they. Kenny was five and Jacky two. I still sweat when I think of what would have happened if that old mother bear had charged into the yard just then.

We got our crop in 1958, some for greenfeed and the rest we threshed.

We also got our first bank loan, $300 with which to buy pigs.

Now we were really beginning to feel like budding farmers. But after Christmas our little dugout ran out of water. Mr. Grubert loaned us a water tank with a submarine heater in it. So from then until breakup in March I melted snow, for the house, 23 head of cows and calves and 35 pigs. One morning in March I went down to light the fire in the tank heater. I got it lit and was shoveling snow in, when I happened to glance at the dugout. It was brim full of water. I was practically hysterical with joy. I must have made 20 trips down there that day, just to look at that lovely water.

Kenny started school in 1958 at Bridge Creek. He only had to walk about one and a half miles, but it seemed a terrible thing to send a six year old out by himself on a black December morning.

We had a few sows and sold the weaners right off the sows.

Our road out to the main road was just a trail through the bush part way and the rest a seismic line. In the spring it was impassable for anything but horses or tractor. So the truck was parked at the road and we had a bunch of weaners to go. We had bought our first tractor, a Cockshutt 40, that winter and we had some old topless 45 gallon barrels. We loaded them on the stoneboat, put as many pigs as we thought was safe in each barrel and hauled them to the truck. It didn't hurt them a bit and away they went to the Auction Mart.

One day Norine and Jack came to see us. We were walking around the yard and there were mushrooms every place. We picked a milk pail full and then decided we should fry some roosters to go with them. The chickens weren't fenced in and we couldn't catch them. So I went back to the house for the .22 and I shot three. What a feast we had!

Then Grovedale got its first bus. What a marvelous thing! Jim was hired as driver and sent to Calgary to pick up the bus. He drove for three years and a couple months in the fourth. The wages weren't very high and we weren't getting ahead at all, so he went running cat for Johnny Kharchuk. It had been so good having him home and it was awfully hard getting used to him being gone all week again.

Sometime during the bus interlude I had filed and got the SE 19-69-6-W6. We were still renting NE of 19 and the land office informed us we would have to move to my quarter and put in residence duties. We had built a double frame garage so we moved into it. Dennis Howell was running cat for Ross and one morning at the end of June, 1961, he hooked onto it and pulled it up here on my homestead. Four or five months after we moved, the land office said we could buy the NE 19. If they had done that in the spring, we wouldn't have had to move. If we had owned instead of renting the land we were on that would have passed as residence duties.

In the early sixties beef was quite low so we got rid of the Herefords. We traded three heifers for two Holsteins and a Holstein-Brown Swiss cross, then bought eight head of Jerseys, Ayrshires and Guernseys from Boyd Cooke.

Jim went to work for Can-For so with that, 14 sows and a lot of cream, things began to go a little faster.

Terry was born in 1959 and was the happiest baby I ever saw. He slept through the night, right from the beginning, was never sick and always smiling. We weren't so lucky with our last baby, Douglas Ross. He was good, but too quiet and never strong. He died with acute bronchitis when he was only two months old, the worst heartache we ever had.

We opened up quite a lot more land and bought more beef cows. So now we had a bit of everything to make a dollar with.

I'm not sure of the dates any more but I think it was 1963 when Ross quit logging and went to work for the Alberta Forest Service. Then he sold his land and went to work for the Eagle Lake Lumber Co. at Prince George, B.C. They lived at Giscome, just out of Prince George a few miles. I don't know exactly what all he was doing but he was hired to increase production in their various logging operations, and he succeeded. Then on May 2, 1965 he was flying a company plane, a small Cessna, from Grande Prairie to Prince George. He disappeared in the Monkman Pass. There was a huge search for him and even after the official search was called off, a lot of private planes kept on. They flew hundreds of hours and though we didn't know any of these men, we will always be grateful.



Lois Hickey.

Ross was found August 14. The plane was upside down and he was still strapped in his seat. It seems probable that he died instantly. He is buried in Prince George. We have lost track of Gwen. She lived in Vancouver for several years. She quit writing to us about three years ago and we don't know if she is dead or alive.

The years flew by and about 1970 we bought a section of crown land seven miles southwest of the home quarter. We pastured about 70 head of cattle up there and kept the rest at home.

The kids were growing up and the boys didn't think they wanted to farm. So in 1975 and '76 we sold everything but the home quarter.

Jim still works for Can-For as he has done for the last 15 or 16 years. I am home, as always, with only a few Simmental cattle and an 18 year old Jersey cow to look after.

Terry lives at home but the rest of the kids are married and have their own homes.

Even more important were our hard working sons and daughter. Homesteading would be really tough without a family.

We have met a great many grand people since we came here, the Pensons, Heads, Smiths, Deffners, Gruberts, Howells, Tates, Yates and McAuslands - all old-timers and the people who really opened up this country.

We have been broke, cashwise, 90 percent of the years we've been here. But we were and are happy. What more can a person ask?

The Dennis Howell Family

by Joan Howell

Dennis moved to the Grovedale district in late 1939 with his parents and sisters, Jean and Winnie. They moved from the Dimsdale area to the old Frank Bousfield place where they lived for about four years. In or around 1946 his dad bought the old Otto Sorley place where we were to later build a house.

There was no school in the Grovedale area when Dennis moved here so that ended his career as a schoolboy, which was fine from his point of view.

I moved to Bridge Creek with my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Comeau, in 1939. I was nine years old when I started school as there wasn't one before then. Mom taught my sister Arline and I correspondence before we started school. We had to ride horseback from Bridge Creek to Grovedale to go to school and I was not the best horseback rider, I'll tell you that. The horse I rode was an old pigeon-toed mare that was as slow as molasses in January but she would always get me to school on time, providing I started early enough. In winter we had a closed in cutter with a heater in it which was pulled by a team of horses. This was used for travelling to and from school. On one occasion Arline had fallen out along the way and the cutter had run over her. We found her, half laughing and half crying but not badly hurt.

I was about 16 when I met Dennis. He was riding a black horse with white stockings and although I didn't care much for the horse, I sure did like the owner.

Dennis's mother passed away when he was 15 so he started working out at quite a young age. He had several odd jobs when he was young. One of the first being for Billy Salmond on the Smoky where he worked with cows. He worked with some pack outfits and did farming for neighbors as his homestead kept him broke. He also worked off and on at the Thompson ranch. Later he became a full-time catskinner. He started working for Park Brothers Ltd. in 1967 and stayed with them until they sold out in 1978.

We were married in 1953. We moved to Hazelmere where Dennis worked for Bert Dalgleish for about a year. We then moved back to Grovedale where our first son Ken and I stayed at my parents place while Dennis built our first house on SW 34-69-6-W6 which his father owned. Our first daughter, Brenda, was born in 1955. A second daughter, Linda, came along in 1958. There were three more additions to our family later on, Steven in 1963, Jim in 1965 and Shelley in 1968.

We had some very good neighbors through the years, the closest being Art Anderson who lived straight south of us. Roy McAusland is now living there.

The kids all attended school here in Grovedale until Junior High when they were bussed to Grande Prairie. The three oldest had to walk the two miles to and from school the first while until the bus started to pick them up. The three youngest are still going to school and living at home. Brenda is working and comes home on weekends. Linda married Jack Hemerle from Grande Prairie and they are living in Grovedale. Ken passed away in May, 1972.

We have enjoyed living in the Grovedale area and have watched it grow from a small community with families few and far between to a now thriving community.

Joseph R. Howell

as told by Jean (Mrs. Walter Smith)

My father was born in Paris, Ontario in 1886. He served overseas with the Canadian Forces in World War I in the Infantry division. After returning from overseas, in April of 1919, he came to the Dimsdale area to start farming. He had a Soldier Settlement Grant on the NW of 14-71-7-6 where Fred Dobbyn now lives.

In June of 1920, he married Mary Dennis of Brantford, Ontario at Spirit River. At that time the train came as far as Grande Prairie, but was very slow. Dad had a nice driving team, he met mother at Spirit River where they were married and they arrived back in Grande Prairie before the train.

For the next few years, Lake Saskatoon seemed to be the centre of their social activities with picnics, ballgames and dances. We did our shopping in Grande Prairie.

In 1927, we moved to Grande Prairie where Dennis and Winnie were born and I started school. Dad continued to farm. In 1930, we moved back to the farm and I went to the old Wapiti School. By that time Leslie's had the store and post office at Dimsdale.

In 1935, we moved on to the "Buster South farm" which Dad had rented. We then went to the Flying Shot School. In 1937, we moved to the Ray Dillon farm for two years.

In 1939, we moved across the Wapiti to Grovedale. Mother passed away in 1943. Dad resided in the Grovedale area until his death in 1975. The children all reside in Grovedale.

Jim Kimmerly

Jim Kimmerly came to the Peace River country in 1912 with Jack Smith, and was a member of the Old Timers Association. His first trip to Grovedale was in 1924 as

Assistant Ranger to Dan McMillar, to fight the fire that burned through the whole district. The crew consisted of:

Ranger ..... Dan McMillar
Ass't ..... Jim Kimmerly
Packer ..... Roy Mitchell
Patrolman ..... Ed Strelecki (Bohunk Ed)
Foreman ..... Sandersen (The Joker)
Cook ..... Fred Burleau
Also about 15 men.

Jim trapped here from 1926 for many years. His line ran from the Wapiti to the Porcupine (Kakwa). The first man he met was Mr. Plum, who owned the cattle ranch east of the district, and sold to John Haan.

Furs were a good price, and Jim sold muskrats to the Hudson's Bay Company at Sturgeon Lake for as high as $5.25. A good fox brought $50.

In 1929, Jim met the Gabler family, who lived in a log cabin that had been built by a man named Joachim.

The settlers remember Jim as a ferryman. His first ferry job was in 1917 at the old Bezanson crossing on the Smoky. He came to Grovedale in 1946 and stayed until the bridge was built in 1958. One unpleasant duty was to take Tom Holmes' body across in the boat. Tom was one of the early settlers here, and died in his cabin in April when the only way to cross the river was by boat. He also ferried the Braun boy across after he'd drowned in the whirlpool below the ferry. Of course there were pleasant trips too, such as wedding parties and new babies. Jim retired and lived in Grande Prairie.

The Dale Landry Family

by Mona Landry

Dale Landry was born December 28, 1937, at Buffalo Lakes, Alberta to Frank and Joan Landry, on his parents' farm. His father was a French Canadian from Quebec, who arrived in the Peace River country in 1922 by the Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia railway. His mother, the former Joan Saul, come over the Edson Trail in 1911 as a small child with her parents (Fred and Margaret Saul and family) and had settled in the Bear Lake district.

Dale came from a family of ten. His first years of school were spent at the Canuck and McHenry schools north of Bear Lake. A few years later, when Dale was eight or nine years old, the family moved to Grande Prairie.

I was born June 26, 1938 at North Star, Alberta, to Norman and Edna (Simpson) Cook, on my grandmother's farm. My parents originally came from Saskatchewan and arrived in the Peace River country in the late 1920's. I was from a family of five and my first years of school were at Brownvale, Berwyn, and Grimshaw. I then moved with my family to Grande Prairie in 1955 and continued high school in Grande Prairie.

On November 6, 1957, Dale and I were married in Grande Prairie. Our first home was a small two room house with a wood stove, which we rented for $25 a month. Our first daughter, Karen, was born in July, 1958. Our second daughter, Joyce, was born February, 1960, in Grande Prairie. Vernon was born in July, 1963, two years after we had moved to Grovedale.

In June, 1961, we moved from Grande Prairie to Grovedale. As an employee of Lawrence Kirby (building contractor), Dale was hired to manage his farm which consisted of 12 quarters of homestead land, located four and a half miles west of Grovedale store, now owned by R. Coates.

In 1966 we finally were able to purchase an acreage of land from Enos Kyle, who owned a coffee shop on top of the Wapiti hill. At that time the old hill was still being used, winding up with its treacherously steep hair pin curves and ending up where our house and back yard is located today. Every spring you would see Albin Jacobson, spade in hand, ditching water off the road. During that time of year, the road was impassable. The new hill was rebuilt in 1964. It was greatly appreciated along with the new present bridge.

In 1967 our business of Five L Contracting Ltd., originated. Dale contracted most of his work from the Grovedale area and south from various firms such as the Forestry, Imperial Lumber, Atlantic Richfield, and Proctor and Gamble Co. Ltd. His work varied from logging to gravelling and maintenance of roads. Over the years many of the local boys worked for Dale operating his equipment.

In 1970, the first broomball team from Grovedale was formed and was called the "Five L Loggers". Five L Loggers played the whole season without a loss and won the Grande Prairie Broomball trophy. The boys from Grovedale area on that team were: Mike Ryan, Darrel McAusland, Roy McAusland (Goalie), Ronnie Olson, Eric Olson, Kenny Howell, Don Tate, Larry Smith, Neal Smith, Eugene Landry, Lorry Landry, and Dave Brown (Coach) from Grande Prairie.

In 1974 we purchased two quarters of land from Albin and Art Jacobson, where "Landry Heights" is located today. In fall 1976 the land was approved for residential subdivision which Dale developed himself.

In spring of 1979, we moved from the top of the Wapiti Hill to Dimsdale where we purchased the former Alf Head farm.

Karen was married in April 1979 to Murray Tarsiuk of Grande Prairie and they are now building a new home in "Landry Heights" Subdivision. Joyce and Vernon are still living at home.

Leonard and Sharon Loyek

by Len

Although not of the early settlers of the area, we arrived at a time (May 1970) when Grovedale really began to come into its own.

I worked for more than nine years at the Gold Creek Gas Plant, sharing work with the likes of Dale and Pender Smith, Darrel McAusland and Gilles Fortin. Sharon worked some years at Penson Elementary School and both our children John and LaDon attended school there.

But what really has made Grovedale "home" for us is the fact that we were able to take over a partially developed homestead on S½ 4-70-7-6.

The sense of achievement, clearing raw land and bringing it into production is very gratifying. Some critics from outside the area were silenced when they saw the varied and good crops that could be grown. In 1976 a sample of pedigreed Grizzly Oats produced on the homestead, (weighed 49 lbs. per bushel) captured second prize at the Toronto Royal Winter Fair. Indeed Grovedale can compete with the best.

The Dennis Roy McIntosh Family

I was born April 8, 1928, on the family farm at Dimsdale. There I grew up and took my first seven years

of schooling at the Wapiti school. In the fall of 1941, we moved to Grande Prairie. At this time, Dad was in the army, and brother Ken in the air force. I took grade eight at the old Grande Prairie High School.

The following summer, we returned to the farm. Grade nine was taken at the Hermit Lake School with Eileen Murray, from the Millarston district as my teacher. Grade ten found me in Grande Prairie at the high school.

Grade eleven, and my first year of twelve, I was at the dorm in Grande Prairie. This was in part of the old army barracks. There, while in grade eleven, I met a young girl from the Sexsmith area, who would in years to come, play a very large part in my life. Her name was Olive Spry, daughter of Walter and Rosetta Spry, old-timers of the east Sexsmith district.

Teachers were very scarce at this time, so at age eighteen years, I went to the North Kleskun School to teach the children by correspondence lessons. I had 13 pupils, and I still have many memories of this year. Since the school was only about three and a half miles from the Spry home, I spent a good deal of time there.

Following this year, I returned to Grande Prairie and completed grade twelve. The following summer, I spent on a farm in Ontario. This was a mixed farm, with one of the major projects a turkey operation. This was a great experience for me.

Upon returning from Ontario, I went into partnership on the home farm with brothers Ken and Gordon. On November 30, 1949, Olive and I were married at Sexsmith. Our two children, Sherida and Bob were born while we were on the home farm.

In the fall of 1953, we moved to the Spry farm east of Sexsmith and farmed there until the spring of 1957. While there, son Ronald was born.

The spring of 1957 found us in Grovedale. We settled on three quarters of land one mile south of the store. At the same time, we filed on a half section of homestead land two miles west of where we lived. While at Grovedale, daughter Barbara and son Russell arrived.

In 1968, we sold the farm. The home three quarters going to neighbor Sherman Head, and the other half section to Fred Drysdale. This is the land that the Drysdale boys now have their dairy on. This same year we moved to our present location, seven miles north-east of Grande Prairie.

For six years, from 1970 to 1976, I worked as a fieldman for the Independent Order of Foresters, at the same time building up a poultry farm, which became full time in 1976.

Our oldest daughter, Sherida, graduated from high school, took one year of business college, and worked for several years, marrying Ken Rossol in 1972. They now have one son, Blake Gordon.

Bob graduated from high school and now works in Grande Prairie. In May, 1978, he married Donna Edgington of Grande Prairie. Ronald attended high school in Grande Prairie and two years of SAIT in Calgary. In September of 1978, he married Irene Kibermanis of Red Deer. They now live at Sylvan Lake.

Barbara graduated from the University of Alberta in 1977, studied in France the following year and is now employed in Edmonton.

Russell is now in grade ten at the composite high school in Grande Prairie.

The Monty Mellon Family

by Lloyd Mellon

Monty Mellon immigrated to Canada from North Dakota, meeting and marrying Lorretta Knupp in High River, Alberta, in 1928. They and their baby girl, Ada, came to Grovedale in 1931.

They lived with Walter Edwards the first winter because there was no cabin on their land. That first winter was an open one, no snow until March, so Monty spent the winter getting out logs and building their first home. They moved into their cabin the spring of that year.

When Monty was working on the ferry there was a crew of 11 men. At one point they ran out of food and the only money that they had was a dollar contributed by Monty. They gave the dollar to Carl Deffner and told him to get a dollar's worth of beans in Grande Prairie. Carl bought a large sack of beans, but on the way home he overturned his wagon on the banks of the Wapiti and the only disaster was the beans, so once again they were without food. A kindly neighbour, Jack Thompson, took pity on them and took them a supply of groceries. In 1935 Monty and Lorretta moved to Thompson's Ranch and worked there until 1936.

Monty worked with Percy and Walter Smith, and other members of the community, taking out logs and helping to build the first Grovedale School in 1944.

At one time Monty worked for Society Red. Red didn't have any cash so he gave Monty a pig instead of wages. The only way Monty had of getting the pig home was to tie it up in a boat and row it across the Wapiti. When he reached the shore he tied a rope on the pig's leg and chased it up the hill to Percy Smith's. He was now the proud owner of the only pig in Grovedale.

By this time there were seven children. Ada died at the age of nine years. Ethel married Dave Walters and lives in Prince George. Lloyd married Rose Silvaniuk and they live in Beaverlodge. Fred is married to Marie McLean and lives in Grande Prairie. Earl is married to Myrtle Trider and lives in Sexsmith. Doris married Dave Grobel and lives in Edmonton. George, the youngest boy, died at the age of two years.

The John Miller Family

John Devere Miller was almost born an American. His mother, a war bride, in 1919, was carrying John when she and her husband arrived in South Bend, Indiana, from her home in Perthshire, Scotland. But Howard was in a hurry to get to his own home, two and a half miles southeast of Grande Prairie to linger there. John was born in a little log hospital on a freezing day on March 13, 1920.

In those days being the oldest son put a heavier load on young shoulders. He worked side by side with his father, clearing trees and brush and learning to handle the horses that were used for all the various jobs. All this was done by the time he was 14 years old. He didn't have much time for school, especially after his dad was injured in an accident. As a result, he didn't return to school after grade seven. Because of his dad's training, John became one of the best woodsmen and trapper, on a trapline that became his when his father passed away.

Along came the war. John heard that the wages in the army were better than he was getting from I.V. Macklin or Stan Moore, so with his younger brothers old enough



Doreen, Marvin, John, Gerald, Joan and Marilyn Miller.

to help out at home, away he went. As a result, he spent all the war years from 1941 in the army overseas. John and his youngest brother Bill, who had lied about his age to enlist, returned home in the spring of 1946 and together they went looking for land, which the VLA required them to do. They decided on Grovedale, but they didn't start homesteading until after they found a work mate. Bill wooed and married Jean Kasprow of Wembley. John met Doreen Hawkes at a dance where she was playing piano for the Clarence Sjerdal orchestra at Dimsdale in the summer of 1946. After almost two years of courting, Doreen finally said, "I do", on May 7, 1948. It was a late spring, roads still muddy, a few washouts, but some of the Dimsdale district men heard of the wedding dance coming up and took it upon themselves to ready the road by filling the washouts and repairing the culverts. Being the first dance of the spring, it therefore drew a very large crowd of well wishers. All this was appreciated by John and Doreen.

While Doreen and Jean waited at their respective family homes, the men went to Grovedale. Bill to the old Trembley homestead (now Vandemark) which had several good log buildings. John's quarter was all bush with no buildings, so he made the Nellie Child's shack, a half mile away, liveable. After this was done, they hired Duncan Bain with his one and a half ton to haul the necessary belongings of both couples to their new homes. Doreen stepped to the door of the one room shack, looked around frowning, at the floor, closet, cupboards of rough lumber, until she came to the brand new white kitchen range. That immediately brightened her day. That was June 1st and two days later a garden spot was kindly donated to them on Sel McAusland's farm across the road. Despite the late date, it surprisingly brought good results. Today this spot is still as good as it was then.

Brushing land was taking place, with Bud Stephens and Jack Penny on the caterpillars. In July, John and Bill took their steel wheeled John Deere tractor and broke 60 acres of the Albert Partlow farm in Flying Shot. The payment was Mr. Partlow's breaking plow, which came in very handy for breaking their own properties.

When winter came, money had to be made to enable land progress and for livelihood, so both families moved to Stephen's sawmill. This was to be the routine every winter until the children became of school age. One winter John and Harry Smith worked at Jack Haan's mill, while Doreen did the cooking for the crew of twelve. Harry got a great chuckle one day, watching John bracing a beef quarter with his left moccasin-rubbered foot and cutting the meat off in large chunks with a sharp Swede saw. The meat was usually quite tough, but with long careful cooking in the black cast-iron pots, the results were quite favorable. John and Harry worked for nothing that winter. Mr. Haan died the day before the settlement, as a result Doreen's small wage had to go a long way.

Four children were born while on the VLA quarter. Marvin and Joan had to walk two and a half miles to school until the roads were passable for the car. After ten years the place proved up and being in an almost inaccessable area for proper roads, a drier place was needed. The Sel McAusland homestead, one mile away, was chosen to be an ideal spot to bring up a family, which now consisted of five; Joan, Marvin, Marilyn, Howard and Gerald. Mr. and Mrs. McAusland moved to their son Bill's and life went on for the Millers on the newly acquired quarter.

Joan and Marvin finished grade nine in Grovedale and finished high school in Grande Prairie. Marilyn was in Opportunity class and then went on to further training at Calgary and Edmonton Rehabilitation Centres. Howard at the tender age of four took sick with fever and thereafter became epileptic. He has been in Red Deer hospital and presently at the Eric Cormack Centre in Edmonton. Gerald, at birth, was a blue baby, causing brain damage, but is home and attending Swan Industries in Grande Prairie.

John supported his family by working for the Forestry, County and for the last 15 years with Canfor.

Doreen was an active community worker and held executive positions for many years. During one term, Miller's helped instigate the renovations of the old one room school into a fine hall by an addition at one end. John was the building foreman and he and the local men were very ambitious and enjoyed working together on this much needed project. Mrs. Pete Comeau, Doreen, Albin Jacobson and Jack Penson forfeited most or all payment for playing for fund raising dances so monies could be accumulated for this much needed project.

Back to the Millers. Joan married Bud Stoll from Wembley. After Bud's death two years later, she worked in Calgary and finally Edmonton and is now married to Ontario-born Ron Caine and has a daughter, Allison Jennifer. They have recently moved to Grande Prairie and will presently be living on the family quarter in Grovedale.

Marvin married Peggy Friez, Dale Landry's niece, of Winnipeg. They reside there with their two children, Carey and Jim.

Marilyn is Mrs. Rex Sterling of Grande Prairie.

John is busy with his logging operation job and also finds time to trap and participate in the new hall duties. He is a member of the Legion and Trapper's Association.

Doreen is a member of the Sons of Norway, active with the mentally retarded, the Senior Citizens and with her orchestra.

The Jack Penson Family

by Dorothy Penson

In 1937, Jack went out to Grovedale to look at the land with the idea of homesteading. He had trapped south of there for several years.

We filed in 1937. That winter Jack and Pete Comeau took out bridge timbers, tamarack, and light poles and hauled them into Grande Prairie.

We came out to the farm in the summer of 1938 to put up hay in Billy Salmond's meadow southeast of our place. We had a good sized stack of hay, which was needed for the horses. In March, 1939, Jack was hauling bridge timber across the river on solid ice. The next day, we started to move our belongings out to the homestead. When we came to the river, the ice was starting to go out. We had to walk from block to block of ice. There were some planks in between.

I had five children, Don, Norma, Les, Lyle and three month old baby Norine. Then we got over the big sheet of ice and got to where it was open on the south side. Ed Yates was there with a team and sleigh. All our belongings were in the hayrack. We walked a plank up into the rack. Otto Sorley was there helping and said, "hurry up", the ice might go out anytime.

When we got across there was lots of snow. We went as far as Mrs. Judkin's house, which we had rented, and stayed there until May, when we moved to our place. Jack got out spruce logs to build a house later. He made a temporary house out of poplar poles which were nearby. We broke up some land for a garden over by the little creek. Later there was a forest fire in the Big Mountain area. Jack was made foreman of the fire crew. When he came home, he started to work, seeding two and half acres, which he had cleared the year before. We seeded oats which grew rank, and which we needed for feed for the horses.

Jack and Karl Grubert took out telephone poles that winter and the next spring was the year Norine was lost. That happened on May 23, and we couldn't find her that night. Karl Grubert heard her, but when everyone rushed over, they made so much noise that she stopped making any noise, and they thought it must have been something else. The willows were very thick and made it hard to search. They walked around searching all that night, but didn't find her. The next day, all the neighbors from Grovedale came down to help. The police didn't come right away because they were at the Beaverlodge Sports. She was found about 8:00 o'clock the evening of May 25. She had been out 58 hours. My mother was staying with us and heard the hollering when they found her. She said, "Dorothy, I think they have found her". I had given up all hope. Norine was two a half years old at the time and I had a six months old baby, Madeline.

Jack joined the army in June, 1941, and was there until the end of the war in 1945. During that time, we moved to Grande Prairie and we had two more children, Charlie and Jackie. We lived near the barracks so Jack could be close to work.

After the war, July, 1945, we moved back to the farm. Our family was now eight children, Marlene, Gwen and Sandra were born later.

Jack took out pulpwood and sold it, there being a lot of fire killed timber, because a big fire had gone through during the war years. We took two quarters of VLA land. These are the quarters where Les and Lyle now live.

My family mostly live nearby: Don lives near Valleyview, Norma, at Quesnel, Les, Lyle, Norine, Madeline and Gwen live at Grovedale. Charlie and Jackie live near Sexsmith, Marlene in Dawson Creek and Sandra at Grimshaw.

I have at present 46 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

Helen Shand

I was born in Alliance, Kansas in 1887 and as a child we lived in many places. From Kansas to Missouri, Los Angeles, Grants Pass, Oregon and then to Oyen, Alberta. I came to the Grande Prairie area in November, 1916, to live with my brother Paul Ashmead while my husband William Erskine was overseas with the 175 Battalion. He was killed in action at Vimy, France, in 1917.

Paul's log cabin was near Flying Shot Lake and consisted of one large room, one door and three windows. It had a plank floor and poles and sod for a roof. It was furnished with a wood burning cookstove and airtight heater, plus homemade table, chairs and cupboards. My brother slept on a hay mattress and I and my two children, Jessie and Norman, had a double bed I had purchased when we arrived in Grande Prairie. We had kerosene lamps and our water came from the lake.

A building donated by the Cliffords of Flying Shot was our first school and Jessie started there. Miss McPhee taught there for a term and then a regulation school was built on the Dan Owens land near Jim Tissington's land.

In 1919, I filed on a homestead in the Dimsdale area and as I had sold my land at Oyen, I was able to build a home of my own. I remarried that year to Duncan Bain and we had three children, Helen, Duncan and George.

In 1925, we moved to the Millarston district, but as there was no school yet, the children and I stayed in town in the winter, but when spring came, they batched and I went back to the farm to help. When the Millarston School was built, Jessie was ready for Normal School in Edmonton and Norman went to the Vermilion School of Agriculture.

People who lived near us were the Beaulieus, George Stephens, Mr. G.M. Stephens, Jack Murrays and Mrs. Myers. My son Norman married Netta Stephens.

West of us along the north bank of the river there were three coal mines. Frank Gibney and Frank Maas were joint operators of one: Nick Schneider had one and Tom and Bill Mitchell operated another. Hauling coal to Grande Prairie was another source of income for farmers with four horses and sleighs. These sleighs had a cab built on the front of the sleigh box and the men who drove the horses had shelter and a wood stove for warmth. The miners put on a dance in the Millarston School every spring to wind up the winter's work and these were very popular.

Mr. Rennick was our first teacher. He had a wife and family and they were very musical people so taught all the children to sing, besides the three R's. Our next teacher was Margaret Lewis who was also musical so our children were very fortunate. Some of the others were Jessie Erskine, Don Caldwell, Bill Sparling.

In 1939, we opened the store and post office in Grovedale and spent the next ten years there.

We moved into the district with out first load of groceries, $45 worth, which included two 49 pound bags of flour, one, pink gingham and the other, blue. I recall we splurged and bought ten pounds of mixed candy and

in a few days it was full of ants, a real disappointment. We purchased only necessities such as lard, yeast, sugar, matches, flour, beans, rice, macaroni, bacon, syrup, and snuff, of which a great deal was used in Grovedale. In 1939, much more could be bought for $45 than now, but even at that it was a very small load and I realized it.

As it was in the spring break-up we were only able to take our load as far as the river, because the ferry had not yet been put in operation. Pender Smith Sr. a real bulwark of the district, met us, helped boat our stuff across, and delivered it to the store. I would like to pay tribute to Pender here. He helped me in so many ways, as he did anyone who needed help, and was a kind and loyal friend. He was the road foreman for all the years that I was in Grovedale. He knew how to build grades, where to put in culverts, and was completely impartial in his judgement. I know he and his wife were loved and admired by one and all.

In 1941, we seemed to have our heads above water far enough to seriously consider building a school house. I approached the Department of Education and after much red tape and some compromises, the department suggested we erect the building (they gave us a sort of blueprint as to the size and windows) at our own expense. The department would furnish the desks, etc. and of course, pay the teacher's salary.

So, in 1942, the settlers almost to the last man (and women, too) put their shoulders to the wheel, so to speak, and built a school.

Allan Wardill gave three acres on which to build the school. The men, with axes and saws, cut the logs, put in the doors and windows, and lined it with ten-test. While the school was being built, the women carried them hot lunches.

The music was supplied locally. Clarence Gabler fiddled, as did Jack Penson and Joe Letendre. Albin Jacobson and Cyril Gabler were excellent on the guitar, and they were satisfied with as little as a dollar a night. A Grovedale dance in those days was a full seven or eight hours. These do's were held in the settlers houses, the young danced and those not so young played cards, or just sat and talked. Some nights, I expect, more was accomplished than at the United Nations, more amicably and inexpensively, I might add.

In the meantime, we kept working for and on a real school building.

We moved into our new school house during Easter, 1945. How proud we all were of this fine building, our own achievement. It even had a fir floor, $42 a thousand, (paid for by a quilt the ladies made and raffled) a good cedar shingle roof, the standard number of windows on the east side, a fine oil tank heater that held a four foot length of firewood, tamarac or spruce. We tried to manage with one privy, but found it was not sufficient even in such a frontier location, so Montie Mellon erected the second one.

The school project was not the only obstacle the settlers had to wrestle with. Some way, we all had to keep the "pot boiling", which often consisted of wild meat, wild fruit, and our own vegetables.

I think here is the place to pay tribute to the finest Ranger of that period, Pete Comeau. He did observe and enforce the law, but I believe he considered the needs of the settlers first and the law came second on many instances. A very understanding and often compassionate man, and respected and loved by all.

In 1946, we built a new store. It was 24 feet by 40 feet and constructed of square logs, sawed by Smith Brothers sawmill. It had spruce siding outside, ten-test outside, sleeping quarters upstairs and living quarters at the back downstairs.

The Sunday School Van Ladies were always a welcome sight to us all. It was not so much a religious influence we felt, as the warmth and cheerfulness they brought us. They were special in many ways and had an uncanny insight as to the needs of each individual.

The Sexsmith Bible School each year sent a pair of very dedicated young women to do what they could to bring the gospel to us. They often stayed a week and held classes for the younger children.

I believe it was in the fall of 1946, that Mr. and Mrs. Boyd Cook opened a grocery store on the Allan Wardill homestead, just south of the school. In 1948, they closed up the business and moved back to Grande Prairie.

During one of the earlier visits of the Sunday School Van Ladies, a Miss Lawrence of Fort Vermilion was the leader. As we had just built a new barn, Miss Lawrence suggested we hold a service in the loft. I recall Cyril Gabler was there at the time and he offered to build a substantial stairway. It was new and clean. We put benches in for the guests and a table and chair for Miss Lawrence. Nearly all the settlers attended. It was something special to us all, something intangible we were in need of.

As I stated in the beginning, we were there ten years. It was the most interesting and at times the most exciting years of my life. I still have a personal interest in those who are left of the original settlers. We all shared a common cause, survival, and made it.

Grovedale, today, is a thriving community, a new modern five room school with buses to carry the older students over to higher learning in Grande Prairie, electricity in most homes, splendid roads and a bridge across the Wapiti River.

The Pender Smith Story

Pender Smith came to the Grovedale district from Saskatchewan on May 24, 1930, to look over the country, as he had read a glowing account of the Peace River Country in the Free Press written by Mrs. Gabler. After experiencing the drought of the prairies, this part of the world looked pretty good. With the help of Thomas Holmes and Carl Colstad, he built a small log house and cut enough logs for a barn. Mrs. Smith and son Walter arrived from Saskatchewan the following January, 1931, and son Percy, came with Alf Graham in March, 1931, as he had stayed to winter the cattle. The river crossings were at Plums, east of the present bridge, or the Big



First Store and P.O. Grovedale 1939.

Seven, up river. Both of these were forded with horses or rafted. Plum had owned a ranch there and had cut a road down the hill for horses and wagons. Harry Greentree had cleared a road to the Big Seven.



The day the load of straw tipped over on the Wapiti Hill. Pete Bergeron, Percy Smith, Pender Smith.

Land clearing was then all done with axes and as winter was a slack time of the year, the men would cut brush. Tom Holmes tried to get ten acres cleared each winter. When spring came, four horses would be hitched to a walking plow and breaking would begin. The sod had been badly burned by a fire in 1924 and as this was heavy timber at that time, the top soil suffered, so that it produced very little crop. The first five acres of oats yielded one rack load of bundles.



Mrs. Smith cutting ribbon for first bridge to Grovedale.

It wasn't until 1939 that the District Agriculturist suggested alfalfa be tried. This proved worthwhile, and for a number of years, large crops of alfalfa seed were produced at good prices, and the soil improved with this legume.

Travel to Grande Prairie for supplies was difficult. When a settler made a trip, he would take orders for the rest. On one occasion, a settler was making such a trip, and Mrs. Smith asked him to bring 25 cents worth of butter paper. When he returned and was eating lunch, Mrs. Smith looked for her butter paper. Not finding it, she asked him if he had got it. "Butter paper?" he asked, "I thought you said butt paper". He had brought back three rolls of toilet paper.



Mr. and Mrs. Pender Smith, Sr. 50th Wedding Anniversary.

The first ferry was built by the settlers in 1934. When Mr. McQuarrie realized how determined people were to have one, he got the bolts, etc. needed for it. The lumber was donated by Mr. E.E. Cooke, who had a sawmill operating where O'Brien Provincial Park is now. A house was then built for the ferryman. Otto Sorley operated the ferry and his pay was not regular wages, but donations of food from the people using the ferry. He finally did get a salary and stayed until 1945. The year the ferry was built, a road was made up the north hill.

This new road saved quite a lot of miles when compared with the old Plum Crossing. The north hill was bad in winter, as there was numerous springs in it. Each morning the ferryman would take an axe and cut a rut through the ice so the sleigh runner would travel on it, and not slide over the hill. Pender and Percy brought a load of straw out and as the rut had filled up during the day, sleigh, horses and men slid over. No one was hurt, but the straw was scattered all over the hill. This road may still be seen to the east of the hill, in use today.

Pender and Mrs. Smith later retired from farming and had a house built in Grande Prairie. During the years spent in Grovedale, Mrs. Smith was called upon three times to act as a midwife, delivering three babies without a doctor being present.

Percy married Helen Bain in 1943, and they have 4 children, Pender, Margaret, Larry and Neal. They are all married and live in Grovedale. Pender is married to Donna Hansen, Margaret to Joe Basnett, Larry to Janice Dobbyn and Neal to Wendy Dobbyn.

The Walter Smith Family

On January 24, 1931, Walter Smith arrived with his mother from Meacham, Saskatchewan, to join his father who had homesteaded land south of the Wapiti River in what is now known as Grovedale. (See Pender Smith story).

A school teacher, Mrs. Harry Head, lived three miles east of the Smith homestead and Walter went there three times a week for help with his homework. As there was no school in the area at that time, lessons had to come from the Correspondence School Branch in Edmonton.

In 1942, Walter married Jean Howell who had moved to Grovedale from Dimsdale in 1939 with her family. Walter and Jean made their home on the SW 6-70-6-W6. A bachelor, Maurice O'Reilly, had lived on this land in 1935 and had cleared a few acres.

Walter and Jean had three children, Lorraine, Dale and Barbara. Lorraine married Ambrose Lewis of St. Thomas, Ontario, and they live in Langley, B.C. Dale married Gwen Penson of Grovedale. They have three children, Gary, Terryann and Todd. They live on the NW 6-70-7-W6, which was originally homesteaded by William Griffiths in 1937. Barbara married Raymond Newman of Debolt. They have two boys, Pat and Darcy, and live in Valleyview.

Besides farming on a small scale, Walter was in a sawmill operation with his dad and brother, Percy. He also was employed with Alberta Transportation for 18 years where he operated a grader in the Grovedale area until 1979.

Reinhard (Ray) Smuland

With another Saskatchewanian by the name of Otto Berg, I arrived in the district now called Grovedale in early November, 1931.

We set out from our homes near Orcadia, Saskatchewan, in a 1924 Ford roadster and travelled to the Peace River country in the hopes of finding a trapline for the winter. After trying to acquire one southwest of Pouce Coupe, B.C., we returned to Grande Prairie and there we were advised by someone that there was an unoccupied cabin known as "Joachim's Cabin" in the Bridge Creek area, about 23 miles to the south. Traplines at that time were not registered. With a $2 licence a person could trap all fur bearing animals anywhere except on private land. Permission was required on private land. The area in the vicinity of Joachim's cabin was not trapped by anyone so we were free to establish a trapline there.

We stopped for the night at Plum's or Haan's ranch and arrived at Joachim's about noon the following day. After we cleaned up the cabin and fashioned a stove out of tin cans, we set out to explore and set our trapline. We followed Bridge Creek down stream from the present road, coming back to the cabin from the east, a total of about ten miles. We set about 50 weasel traps, using rabbit or partridge for bait and then tended the line every third day. We travelled together when we set the line, but in tending it we alternated, except when Otto talked me into doing it for him, which was quite often.

Trappers generally stopped with us on their way into Grande Prairie or on their way back to the trapline. Among those who frequently stopped in were John Conley and Winston Tibbets. John was still single and madly in love with Nellie Massey, whom he married within that year. Tibbets was his trapping partner. A better musician than a trapper, but a genuine love for the great outdoors kept him in the woods. Joe Dunkel, an American parachutist, who for want of something to do, spent the winter of 1931-32 with Conley and Tibbets. He made his own parachute and jumped with it from a small plane in Grande Prairie the following year. Others that stopped from time to time were Ted Miller, Art Anderson, Cliff Anderson, Tommy Foote, Dan McMiller, Charlie Penson, Pete Comeau, Howard Miller, Ole Overland, Abe Bonman, Ernie, Fred, and Ture Frieberg, Smoky Mike, Sam Hammerwick and the Campbell boys; John, Ed, Pete, Lectove, Harry and Leo. There were many others,



Mike Vasseliff - better known as Smoky Mike.

but those mentioned made a lasting impression on me. These men were some of the true pioneers of the country and collectively a happy-go-lucky lot.

Otto and I spent our first Christmas away from home at the cabin. To celebrate the occasion we decorated a tree with socks and underwear, etc., and made a special bannock with raisins in it, which we had with cow moose meat. Not quite like a turkey dinner with all the trimmings, but considered a feast at the time.

After working on a forest fire in the Red Willow slough area for about ten days, I went out to Smoky Mike's at what is now called Salmond Flats. During the haying season I worked at Thompson's ranch putting up hay. Wages were one dollar a day for a 12 hour day. We put up about 400 tons of hay. Harry Head was the ranch foreman at the time I worked there. The money earned bought my grub stake for the next winter's trapping.

The fall of 1932 Ole Overland and I teamed up as trapping partners and established a trapline across the Smoky River in the Moose River area. We stayed with trapping on the line until Hitler set out to conquer the world. It took over five years of my life to help put Hitler out of business. I joined the Alberta Forest Service in April of 1946. The great outdoors and the deep appreciation of nature that I learned on the trapline made my 27 years with the Forest Service a never ending adventure.

I would like to pay tribute to the courageous men who pioneered the development of the Grovedale district, and the adventurous trappers who led the parade. Many have gone to their last reward, and at least two of the trappers lie buried in the land they loved. Mike Vasseliff (Smoky Mike) lies buried on the flat on the Smoky River and Sam Hammerwick was buried at the mouth of the Kakwa River. Sam was a talented violinist who had played in orchestras in the eastern States. For some unknown reason he had come to trap in the Peace River country. He started out in the spring of 1931 by lining a boat with about an 800 pound load up the Smoky River. It took him three months to reach a flat across from the mouth of the Cutbank River, and there he built his first cabin.

He trapped for about four years and during a very cold spell in the winter of 1935 he found himself without food in a lean-to shelter some distance from his cabin on the Smoky. He froze his feet and hands on the way to the cabin. He went to John Conley's cabin at the mouth of the Kakwa River for help. But since John and Tibbets were out for several days, he died there alone.

Original names of places beyond Grovedale should be mentioned in memory or as a monument to the great pioneers. Places such as Captain Bradley's, Smoky Mike's Flat, Joachim's Cabin, Campbell Ridge, Red Willow Slough, Spruce Camp, Lucas ranch, The Jackpines, McMiller Flats and Creek, Haan's Flat, Plum's Crossing, Deserter's Cabin and The Joker's Cabin. There is a colorful story surrounding each one.

My story for the book, Along the Wapiti, would not be complete if I did not say more about my trapping partner (1932-1939) Ole Overland.

He came to Canada from Norway in the fall of 1929 and spent the first season trapping with Ernie Freiberg, at Big Mountain Creek. We became trapping partners in 1932 and built about 12 cabins between us in the Moose Creek and Bannock Valley areas. We enlisted in the Armed Forces in early spring of 1940, but didn't see much of each other after basic training. Ole stayed with trapping after the war and built a good trapline in the Musreau Lake area. He died on the trapline in March, 1974.

Grovedale General

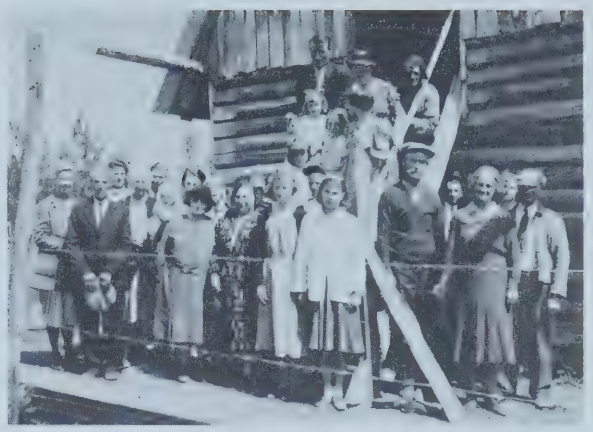
Our history of Grovedale would not be complete without a few words about some of the early settlers whose stories we were unable to get.

Edwards—

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Edwards came to this area in 1930. They had a half section of land, one quarter of which is now owned by Eric Norgren. Mr. Edwards had a patch of tame strawberries and was known to carry a crate of berries on his back to be sold in Grande Prairie. He later made a two-wheeled cart, which he transported the berries in. He was the first man to plant fescue here, and had a few rows, which Mrs. Edwards cut with scissors, and threshed in the house by rubbing the seed out. They left in 1942.



Olwen Griffith, Duncan Bain, Helen Bain, Harry Greentree, George Bain, Jean Howell, Rudolph Olson, Stan Griffith, Margaret Carrol.



First Church Service at Grovedale by the Van Girls.

Bergeron—

A very colorful settler was Pete Bergeron, who lived on the quarter near Landry Heights, now owned by Ed Yates. Pete was a Frenchman of kindly disposition. He made the odd batch of moonshine. A neighbour dropped in one day and Pete offered him a drink, saying his dog Tootsie had fallen into it, but she was clean, so it was okay. He later moved to Grande Prairie, and died in the late thirties.



Picnic at the Wapiti River.

Graham—

Alf Graham came from Saskatchewan in October, 1930 and settled in the Bridge Creek area. He was a slow talker and had some unusual "down east" expressions which are remembered to this day. He died in the late 1940's or early 1950's.

Deffner—

Carl Deffner also came in 1930, and settled in the Bridge Creek area on land later owned by Mrs. Allward. He and Alf Graham lived together for a time in Deffner's log cabin. This cabin was later destroyed by fire and a frame house was built. Carl married a German girl and eventually sold his land and moved to Germany. He raised some very fine Black Angus cattle in the early days.

Holmes—

Tom Holmes originally came from the States, moving to Saskatchewan, and then to Grovedale, settling on the NE 8-70-6-W6. He cleared a total of 80 acres of land with an axe, an average of ten acres a year, and was then in his fifties. He died in 1948.

Waling—

Mr. and Mrs. Lou Waling and family arrived in Grovedale in 1933, and settled in the Bridge Creek area.

Mr. Waling was a blacksmith, and cut a wagon road through from Bridge Creek to South Wapiti so he could get to Wembley where he worked. He was also an auto mechanic. They moved to Grande Prairie about 1937.

Harry Smith—

Harry Smith came with George Stephens as partner in a sawmill in what was called the "Big Seven". This was in 1942. Harry was a blacksmith, steam engineer, bridge builder, and horseman. He settled on land formerly owned by Bill Miller, and now owned by Ed Yates.

Campbell—

Lexie Campbell first settled in Grande Prairie on the site of the present Memorial Arena. This would be around the turn of the century. When settlers began to move in, he moved out to the Patterson farm (now Patterson Place). The settlers kept coming so he moved to Campbell Creek, and raised a large family. He was a Metis, and often used to say that he was the first white man in this country. Many descendents still live in the area.

Banman—

A very colorful character well known to all was Abe Banman, also known as "Red". Over the years, many men worked at the Thomson ranch, and Abe was one of these. He also spent some time at the Smoky ranch, where Mr. Thomson kept his cattle in the summer. He was absolutely fearless, and on one occasion he killed a bear in a den with only a sharpened table knife. Ole Overland, a trapper with two very fine dogs, cautioned Abe to tie his dog up, or Ole's dogs might kill him. Abe refused, saying, "Let them go, — they anyways buy their own clothes."



Selby McAusland and sons: Clayton, Bill, Floyd and Warren.

The Haan Family

by Mrs. Susan Haan

In October, 1919, my husband John, his father and brother Bob, my brother Nick Ehlinger, myself and two small children left Grande Prairie for a ranch along the Smoky River. We had to travel on horseback. I had never ridden on a horse before, and I had to hold the smallest girl in front of me. Needless to say, it was an experience I will never forget. We used pack horses to carry our supplies. At the Wapiti and Smoky Rivers, we crossed in a boat, and the horses swam across.

Our first home across the Smoky was very primitive. It was made of unpeeled logs and had a sod roof and a dirt floor. Over the window openings we had gunny sacks, and a horse blanket covered the door. Having only horses for packing in supplies, we couldn't bring any furniture, but we did manage to bring in a stove. Our groceries were kept in gunny sacks hung from the roof, as there were mice, rats and snakes in abundance.

We had a few hens, and really appreciated having fresh eggs. Snakes would avail themselves also of the warm nests. On one occasion, I found a snake laying in each box. These snakes were harmless garter snakes, but I didn't care to have them around.

We had brought cattle from southern Alberta, and the first winter we lost all but 13 of them. They became ill with a fever, and there seemed to be nothing we could do for them.

Our only neighbors were the Bill Lucas family, living at Big Mountain Creek, and Captain Bradley, who lived about 12 miles up the Smoky. Visiting was a rare event and enjoyed all the more for its scarcity. We would join the Lucas's at times and all go on a picnic. We lived six miles apart, so a good deal of time was spent travelling. Another visitor was the Forest Ranger, Dan McMillar, who would stop in on his patrols.

Later, we built a better cabin with a floor of split poles, which I planed. This cabin had several rooms and was fairly comfortable. Now another question arose. What to do about schooling for our daughter Evelyn? We finally took her to Grande Prairie on horseback, and from there to the mission at Sturgeon Lake. Later, we also took Saferna, and only saw them in the holidays.

In 1923, we left the Smoky ranch, and came into Grande Prairie. From there we moved to the Plum ranch, in what is now Grovedale. On our first trip to this ranch, we suffered a serious loss. When we crossed the Wapiti River, we had to leave some of the supplies on the river bank overnight, as we hadn't enough horses to carry them. John covered the supplies with a canvas, and weighted it down with some rocks. The next morning he went back for the load, and found that everything was gone. The river had risen during the night and washed tarp, groceries, and all down river. John searched for miles down river, but found only an old kimona hanging from a tree. We had lost all our clothes and winter supplies. A bitter blow.

We had about 300 head of cattle at the Grovedale ranch. Wild hay was cut and put up on the large meadows each year. At this time, my husband was employed by the Forest Service. We had quite a comfortable home, built of logs, with a good floor and roof.

It grew increasingly hard to part with the children for such long periods, and in 1926 I moved back to Grande Prairie and put them in school there. John and my brother Nick stayed for another year, and then sold to Mr. Jack Thompson who operated the ranch for many years.

Life of a Trapper

By H. O. Overland

I am a seedy old trapper, without any cash to my name
A few dozen rusty steel traps, but I'm happy just the same.
I roam over hills and valleys, my business is my own.
If people don't like me the way I am, they simply can leave me alone.

I stagger along through the timber, packing the squirrel I caught.
The Swede who invented the packsack, he really should have been shot.
At night when I get to the cabin; dogs bedded down and fed,
I sit up half the night to skin and to stretch before I can go to bed.

This trapping is really a gamble, you never know where you stand.
You may catch a marten or fisher, or maybe your Whiskey Jack friend.
And sometimes the trap sits there open, grinning at you in the pen,
You just put some "Stinkum" on and off down the trail again.

The fur is mounting up in the cache now, I guess I'll soon go and see
My old friend Walter Figgures that buys fur for the Hudson's Bay.
Selling the fur is the hardest of all, they rob us we all know.
But Walter is not a bad sort of a guy, as far as fur buyers go.

For a couple of days I'm the live guy in town, money and friends galore,
But after awhile when my funds get low, the boys don't know me anymore.
Only my old faithful lead dog, he whines and wags his tail,
He knows I'm broke and sick from booze, and ready to hit the trail.

Well boys, it was fun while it lasted, but now that the party is through
I guess I'll go down and see Walter and borrow a buck'or two.
So, goodbye to you city slickers, your bar and your liquor store,
Me and my dogs are hitting the trail, back to the trapline once more.



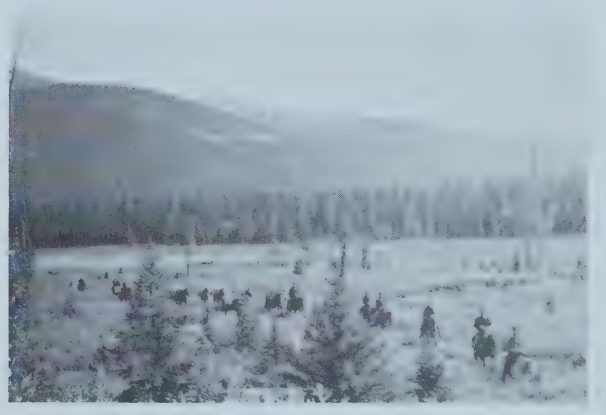
Carl and Anton Berg with their winter catch.



Pete Comeau and Joe Blanchette with a dog team.



Ted Miller, Darwin Bannen, Otto Berg at Joachims Cabin, 1932.

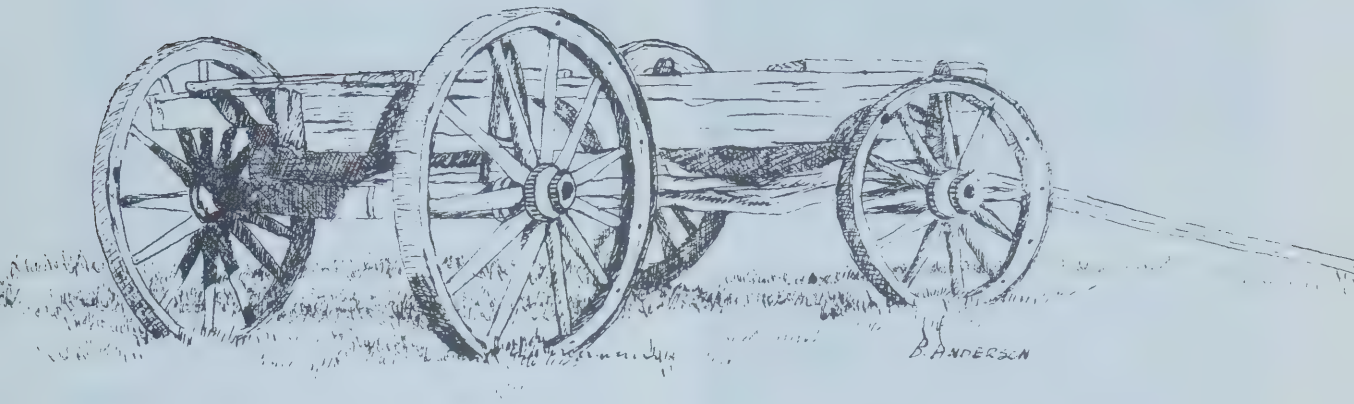


Carl Brooks' hunting party on the trail through the Porcupine Valley in 1943.



Mr. Hugel with wolf pelt.

Chapter 7: Klondyke Trail



Klondyke Trail School District No. 4509

by Mrs. Eileen Wald

I cannot remember it "as it was"
for I did not see it as it was then;
They speak for themselves, those
courageous pioneer women and men -

Although its name brings back memories of 80 years ago, this was one of the more recently-opened schools. It was named for and stood near one of the trails used by those who travelled an overland route to the Yukon gold fields.

Located in the south-east corner of SE 13-71-9-W6, originally homesteaded by Albert Henry, Klondyke Trail School opened in September, 1933 with Joe Montgomery as teacher.

It operated until June 1943. Box socials and dances to raise money for Christmas concert "treats" were annual events.

The school building was moved to Lower Beaverlodge district in 1948 and served there until the County of Grande Prairie busses carried the rural children to centralized schools.

Those instrumental in forming the Klondyke Trail School District were Gust Gitzel, who served as the first chairman, and Jack Bullis, longtime secretary. Over the ensuing years Fred Dolphin, Henry Taylor, and following his death, his son, Harry, and Louis Ulmer were among those who helped guide and direct the new school. Apologies to those who may have been missed.

Ina (Taylor) Cameron began school in 1935 and attended Klondyke Trail School from Grades one to eight. In her words, "My first teacher was Martha Hennig. From my brothers, Willie and Donald, and my sister, Margaret, I have heard that Joe Montgomery was their first teacher at Klondyke Trail School. Howard Minchin became the next teacher after Martha Hennig and remained until June 1938.

In September, 1938, Edna Stokke assumed teaching duties and continued until June 1940. Enrollment was now very low and it was decided that grades one, two and three from St. John's Lutheran School would attend Klondyke Trail School when the 1940 fall term began. From September, 1940 to June, 1942 our teacher was Eileen Murray.

In its last year the school was taught by Bernice C. Eshpeter until February. Matilda P. Kmicik finished out the term. That last year there were only nine pupils enrolled.



Klondyke Trail School (about 1941).
Back row, L. to R.: Elsa Kopp, Donald Taylor, Esther Hennig and Ina Taylor.
Third row: Otto Stefan, Robert Kopp, Dan Kuntz or Ervin Breitkreutz, Doreen Aldred, and Evelyn Kopp.
Second row: Withold Ryll, Leonard Schoepp, Donald Underschultz, Margaret Kopp, Gertrude Kuntz and Olga Stefan.
Front row: John Schoepp, Margaret Ryll and Clara Breitkreutz.



Late 1940 - Teachers, L. to R.: Walter Schienbein (St. John's Lutheran); Harry Sherk (Aspen Ridge); Hillis Stratton (Aspen Dale); Edna Humphrey (Two Rivers); Eileen Murray (Klondyke Trail); and Edith Lechelt (Lower Beaverlodge).

Over the years our classmates were from the following families, (arranged alphabetically): ALDRED, Ted, Bob, Doreen and William; BREITKREUTZ, Erwin, Clara and George; CARTER, Clarence, Birdie and Howard; CRAIG, Helen, Charlie, Bella and Annie; GITZEL, Lily and Harold; HANLEY, Robert; HAUGER, Josephine, Robert, Marvin and Gladys; HENNIG, Edna and Esther; JOHNS, Victor; KAUFMANN, Georgia; KOPP, Fred, Elsa, Robert, Evelyn and Margaret; KUNTZ, Dan and Gertie; MACNEILL, Isabel; OHLINGER, Eldon; ROMKEY, Guy, Doris and Percy; RYLL, Witthold, Margaret and Ewald; SCHELLENBERGER, Norma; SCHOEPP, Leonard, John, Erwin and Helen; STEFAN, Otto and Olga; ULMER, Esther, Ruth and Shirley; TAYLOR, Margaret, Willie, Donald and Ina; UNTERSCHULTZ, Donald; WILDGRUBE, Erwin; WHITE, David, John and Janet; and YOUNG, Ruth.

Names of some of the earliest pioneers who settled within the Klondyke Trail School District boundaries are: Fred and William Dolphin, and W. Risebrough (1910) on Section One; the Eisman family (1911) on Section 12; Albert Henry (1917) on SE 13; H. Pryke (1919) and Idan Thoreson (1916) on W½ of Section 23; W. Romkey (1914) on SE 23 and SW 24; also W. Bell (1913) and Billy Blair (1911) on Section 24, all the foregoing lands being legally described as 71-9-W6. Others arrived a little later, but by the middle 20's many settlers were becoming discouraged by the slowness of the railroad in reaching their area. The E.D. and B.C. railway finally reached Wembley in 1924, but it was several more years before it was built on to Hythe. Many had abandoned or sold their land.

Herman and Emilia Breitkreutz

Herman Breitkreutz came to the Wembley district with his parents from Golden Spike, in March 1927, when he was only ten. He went to school in Wembley, then to St. John's parochial school, after which he helped on the family farm.

On November 5, 1939, he married me, Emilia Schellenberger. We lived with Herman's folks for one year and then moved to George Gordon's place, one-half mile south of the home place. There was one barn with a straw roof, and a little log house, in which we lived for six years. During that time, Herman, along with a few others, went out during the winter and made the logs for our new home, which was built in 1945. I was left in charge of the chores, which included melting snow for the stock.

In August of that year, our oldest son, Alvin, was born. Just before Christmas we moved into our new home, which wasn't nearly finished. A bedroom and kitchen were partially done. The rest of the house was full of gyprock, laths and lumber. Herman's Dad helped us build our house and later in 1959, also built our barn. We hauled water for a few years, even carried it with pails from the neighbors' (Unterschultzes at the time, living where Kauts live now) if I needed cold water to wash butter, which was then printed into pounds and sold in Wembley Department Store, operated by Robert Kranz. After that, we shipped cream.

Later, we were fortunate enough to get a good well drilled by Mr. Oszust, but our transportation and farming was still done with horses for a few years.

It wasn't until we rented another two quarters of land that Herman bought his first tractor. The land was situated two miles north of Mr. Macdonald. He farmed it for awhile, until it was put up for sale, then bought the quarter to the west of Mr. MacNeill.

A few years later we purchased another quarter of land adjoining ours, from my Dad.

Eventually, with the 50's came the telephone and electricity, which made a lot of things much easier, for example, we no longer had to milk the cows by hand.

In October, 1954, our second son Bryan, was born. The boys both got their education in Wembley and Beaverlodge. Alvin married Ruth Delaney from One-Island Lake. They have two children, Jody and Jason, and live in Wembley. Alvin drives a truck for Canadian Freightways. Bryan is also a truck driver, hauling logs and gravel. He married Wendy Berg and they live in Buffalo Lakes.

After living on the farm for 39 years, in 1978 we sold it and retired to Grande Prairie. We have been active members of St. John's Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Womens Missionary League.



The Breitkreutz family at home, L. to R.: Alvin, Emilia, Bryan and Herman, April 1959.

William Bruce

by Ed Breitkreutz

Billy, as everyone knew him, was a young bachelor, coming to Canada, from Scotland in the early 1900's. He homesteaded and settled on land three miles southwest of what was to be the site of Wembley, NW 8-71-8-W6. (Wembley is now located on 80 acres of land previously owned by Billy.)

He owned the north 70.2 acres of NW 15-71-8-W6, with Edward Wedell owning the south 50.1 acres.

Billy farmed until joining the army in 1914. During that time he served overseas, where he was in combat, and gassed. Coming back in 1918, he began farming once again.

During 1920-30, Billy became involved in community affairs. He served as councillor for the Bear Lake Municipality, and was also trustee for the Klondyke Trail School District.

Pacer, a white saddle horse, who moved with the speed of a snail, was his means of travel.

Billy quit farming in 1938, and rented his land out. He passed away on June 9, 1945 at 60 years of age.

James and Sibella Craig

by Bella Craig

As a family, we came to Canada from Scotland in the spring of 1930. My Dad, James Craig, worked for Uncle Alex Craig on the farm.

In the fall of 1933, we moved west of Wembley to the George Gordon farm, which Dad rented. My sister, Helen, brother Charles and myself attended the Klondyke Trail School, and later at the age of seven, my sister Annie started there too. Like our friends and neighbors we lived through the depression during that time but have fond memories of when we lived there.

The farm was sold to Herman Breitkreutz in 1938, so in the spring of 1939, we moved to the Ross Beatty farm east of Wembley, and in 1940, my brother Gavin was born.

Both Helen and Charles served in the war, and upon being discharged, Charles bought a farm southeast of Lake Saskatoon through the V.L.A., and the family moved there.



The James Craig family.

Presently there are just Charles and I, as Dad passed away in 1970, and Mother in 1976. My sister Helen and Annie are both married with families of their own. Gavin married the former Ellen LaValley and they and their family live close by, as does my daughter Gail, her husband Arthur and two boys.

In 1977, Charles sold his farm but kept the original building site with twenty acres on which we now reside.

William Gardner Family

by Violet (Gardner) Gee

My husband Billy Gardner and I, Violet Gardner, came to Canada from England along with our one year old daughter Zoie, in September, 1919. This was quite an adventure for me, for I had never been on a sea voyage before. Many others must have felt the same way! We boarded the Steamship Megantic and sailed to Montreal arriving a week or ten days later.



Billy and Violet Gardner (Gee) and family.

After a week or more of sailing across the Atlantic Ocean, all passengers, half of whom were War brides, were very excited when we landed in Montreal. We were made welcome by members of the Red Cross and many volunteers who were on hand to help all of the passengers. We were all checked one by one and were given food and clothing, for which we were very grateful. Some of us had been sea-sick on the long voyage, so we really appreciated the good meals provided for us. Soon we were on the train that was to convey us across Canada to whatever province we came from or intended to live. Here again, on the train we were treated very specially by volunteer helpers, who again gave us food and more clothing. This was lucky for us, for later on I discovered that a trunk of personal belongings was missing from my baggage. Fortunately it was recovered and forwarded to me nine months later.

We did not fare too well on the train, for we did not travel first class by any means. There was no privacy at all. Men, women and children slept, or tried to sleep, side by side. No cushions and no curtains around or between the seats, and that is all there was in each and every coach. The toilets and washrooms were a disgrace, and no one could step inside without stepping into a puddle or something worse. I was shocked and disgusted and threatened to write a note of complaint to the Railway Company, whichever it was at that time. At the end of



Reverend Jack Burness and Gardner family.

each coach was a kitchen where one could boil water to make tea, or cook something if you had anything to cook. The train was very slow moving, at times often at a crawl, and many passengers got off and walked alongside and picked berries and ate them. I believe they were saskatoons, but I had never seen or tasted them before.

Oh, how happy we were when we arrived in Grande Prairie. "The end of the line," but not the end of the journey. There was still 20 miles to go, and this we made by travelling with a team of horses hitched to a grain wagon. It took over three hours to reach the Mission House at Lake Saskatoon. Here we were welcomed by some friends of my husband, who lived there, by the name of Whittle. They were very kind and invited us to stay with them for a few days, which we did. While we were there we managed to purchase a cook stove, a bed, a couple of blankets, also some pots and pans and a few odd pieces of dinnerware. With a couple of nail kegs for chairs, we were all set. Our home to be was now only six miles away, and soon we had everything loaded in a wagon and off we went, over deep ruts and roots of trees. By this time, I was getting a little nervous, for there were trees all around us, and I wondered if we would ever get out of the forest, before the sun went down. The fellow who drove the team was a real help to us. His name was



Billy Blair.

George Newstead and he helped us to unload and set up the stove. Our homestead, and "soldiers' land grant" were adjoining and the trail which has now become a main highway was bordering our north quarter. Our neighbours to the north and south were Ben and Mrs. Austin, and the Ernie Wilson family. To the west, lived Billy and John Blair, and to the east, George Miller. Later, the Miller quarter was owned by Don Macdonald. We were four miles west of Wembley. It was the middle of September by this time, so there was a lot of work to be done to prepare for the long winter months that lay ahead. Our shack was warm and built of logs and chinked with moss to keep out the frost. We had plenty of fuel for there was wood everywhere. A barn had to be built for the cow we bought, and for the horses we acquired a little later on. A loan was granted by the Soldiers Settlement Board for returned soldiers which could be used to buy horses, cattle and implements. We were also given a cheque by the Government each month for food, etc. This was for a period of six months, after that time, we were expected to be self-supporting.

We were able to meet and visit some of our neighbors now that we had transportation. One of the first families we visited, were the Benksons. They made us most welcome and we had dinner with them. Pete Benkson, the husband, played his violin during the afternoon. I loved the music but it caused me to become homesick, and I cried all the rest of the day. A closer neighbor was Mrs. Ferguson, who taught me to make bread. She had a marvelous recipe for potato yeast, and the bread I made for the first time, rose so high in the oven I could not get it out until I first removed the rack it was on. That was good bread! Mrs. Ferguson also taught me how to make moccasins from moosehide and I became quite expert at that. I made them for my husband and children, also a neighbour who told me they were the best pair he had ever had because he could get three pairs of socks in them, and they were so warm! They must have been size 14!

I was expecting a baby when I left England, and gave birth to a son on January 22, 1920. My husband Billy, had found a midwife who would come in whenever needed. The temperature had dropped to 60° below that night and a phone call was made from a neighbour's house to Dr. Watson in Grande Prairie, 20 miles east of where we lived, to tell him I was in labor. Several hours later, he arrived by sleigh, along with the driver of the team. The horses as well as the men were white with frost when they arrived. Fortunately, all went well and the stork arrived about an hour later, and delivered my oldest son, William Edward.

There was not much one could do that first winter, but I was kept fairly busy with two little ones, knitting and sewing and making meals . . . time moved on. Snow was well over the tops of the fences and Billy made me a pair of skis with some lumber. They were rather heavy and clumsy, but I managed to get around on them, and would go a couple of miles away from home. Sometimes I used snowshoes for a change. We were very pleased to have our friends drop in for a little visit, and we would exchange little items of news and recipes with one another. While the men folk talked for hours about horses, the women would talk of their familes, and how much butter they made, and so on. Life was not very exciting, and I think it would have been great if we had had radio those days. It certainly could have brightened up

our lives during the long evenings. My husband and I would sing and harmonize together and sometimes play cards. Most days after the chores were done, Billy would go and chop down trees, then he would skid them out of the bush and saw them into lengths for fire wood, afterwards splitting them with an axe and piling them up. At times he would load some into the sleigh and sell them in Lake Saskatoon. I believe people paid $5 per cord those days, and we were glad to get it. Cold weather was not all we had to contend with. At times there were periods of drought which one could do almost nothing about, then the grasshoppers would come along and eat the fields of grain when it was just a few inches high. This of course caused a shortage of food for the cattle and horses, and hundreds of cattle died from starvation. Many of the new settlers were very discouraged and just gave up, abandoning their farms and sometimes even their families.

There was no welfare or handouts, and the time of the Hungry Thirties was about to begin. Somehow or other we struggled through, and although we were poor, we were happy. We both worked together in spite of hard times. Winter was almost over now.

When spring came and the snow began to melt I was able to visit with my neighbors a little more, and one day I was invited to go to church, or rather, to a service that was to be held in the Hillside Schoolhouse. I thought this would be a good time to have my little son baptised, so I dressed him in baptismal robes, put a blanket around him and set off to walk across the slough to the Wilsons' home, where I would get a ride to the service. Boy oh boy! I thought I would never make it! Every time I took a step, the snow would give way and I was up to my hips. What a time I had! Then to crown it all, the service had been cancelled, so William Edward's baptism was cancelled for a few years.

Soon it was time to get on the land. Plough shares were sharpened and repairs were made to machinery, which had not been possible during the cold weather. Horses were hitched up and Billy was ploughing his first furrow on unbroken land. He knew how to plough for he had learned to farm before he immigrated to Canada in 1911. We chose a clear space for our garden which had a nice slope to the south. It was good fertile soil, and was soon planted with potatoes and various seeds. How good fresh vegetables were, after being deprived of them so long. We survived mostly on dried fruits and cereal foods, not too much meat that winter. Still, we had milk and butter from our one cow "Molly".

Now that the snow and ice had all vanished, we were busy each day. I helped to pick rocks from the fields and loaded them on the stone-boat, to haul away. There were many stumps of trees to clear off the land. Billy and his team of horses were kept busy from morning till night. This was the way of life for all settlers I suppose, and there was always the hope that some day we would be successful farmers.

As time passed by, our family grew. During the nine years we lived on the homestead we had four children, Edward, Betty, David and Fred. By the year 1924, it was time for Zoie and Ted to go to school, which was situated at Hillside, a distance of at least three miles from home. A covered wagon was provided to pick up children from the neighborhood and during the winter time, a wood burning heater was installed to keep them warm. I marvel that no one was burned or hurt during these dangerous journeys. A local school boy, Jack Wilson, was the driver of the van and I'm sure he must have been very capable, though he could not have been more than 14 years old. I think young people grew up faster those days, and were able to take on responsibility sooner.

In May, 1927, we lost our little daughter, Betty. This was a great loss for us. She had been ill for over a year with poliomyelitis. But for the support of our good neighbors and Dr. Carlisle, I do not know how we could have recovered from the shock. Everyone for miles around offered their help and sympathy.

During the following months, we felt we had suffered enough hardship, and so decided to sell our north half-section of land and return to England. With heavy hearts, and empty pockets (after paying debts we owed the S.S.B.) we sailed over the sea once again, taking our children with us.

We settled into a nice little home in the heart of Warrickshire, Shakespeare country (famous because of the poet Shakespeare, and the beautiful countryside). Another daughter, Sylvia, was born in May, 1928. We stayed for two years, but soon found we had left our hearts in Canada, and so returned to the Prairies once more. This time in Edmonton, my husband, who had come back ahead of us, found employment as a janitor with the Provincial Government.

During the year 1930, I went back to the old homestead to put in residence. This was required by law, to prevent any person who could claim some debt on the property from foreclosing. Off I went with a tent, a Coleman stove, blankets, a small heater, an axe, a few provisions, and my two children, Fred and Sylvia. We spent six weeks under the stars, until the first snowfall. At times I would walk the four miles along the track to Wembley to get food, the two little ones trailing behind. I was told not to worry if I met a bear, just to lie down on the ground and pretend that I was dead. I could see myself doing that! However, I achieved what I had set out to do and wiped off the debt, retaining a clear title to the land. I had left the other children with their father in Edmonton, and was very happy to return to them all once again. Having money coming in each month, was really something, for all through the past years, we very seldom had any and it was mostly through trade that we survived.

As the years passed, our family grew bigger and we now had ten children, six girls and four boys. In order: Zoie, Ted, David, Fred, Sylvia, Ruby, Dorothy, Roger, Patricia and Beverley. All are married and have families, some also have grandchildren, with the exception of Zoie, who remains single. Zoie boasts she has had many children, but has never been married. This is so and still remains that way, for all of her life, since a very early age, she has devoted herself to the care of children, either handicapped, neglected, or orphaned.

Zoie was named "Citizen of the Year" by the City of Edmonton in 1961 and has been honoured many times since then by various groups and organizations. She has many trophies and certificates of merit. Last August, she was guest of honour at a special reception for her, by many of her foster children, the majority of them now being adults. This was the occasion of a reunion for her large family. There were 150 guests in attendance, and the many, many more of her family who were unable to attend, sent their good wishes and congratulations. Up till the present time she has continued the good work, and along with her many other hobbies and commitments she has a very full and rewarding life. Several of her family

have been adopted by her and were fully supported by her own efforts. All were encouraged to develop any talents they had, musically or otherwise. This, especially, has been very rewarding for her. At the present time, she is foster mother to ten children. Some have been with her for the last 16 years — actually since they were babies.

When I think back, it amazes me, realizing how early in life my children became independent and self-supporting. Ted, my oldest son, apprenticed himself as a welder, under a Mr. Hanson who owned a welding business in Edmonton. He was 16 years old then. Eventually, he left for Ontario where at a later date he joined the R.C.M.E. Army and served overseas in France during World War II.

In 1940, he married Leonora Bissell, a young lady he met when visiting his uncle. After the war was over, he brought his wife and two children back to Edmonton, a son and a daughter. Both are married. They also have one grandson. Ted and Nora have been lighthouse keepers for many years and at the present time are in charge of Albert Head Light Station. Previously, they were at Cape Scott and later on Chrome Island Light Station, B.C. They find a quiet life suits them very well. They are lovers of nature and have quite a lot in common. There are many wild creatures to be seen around the coastline, so life is quite interesting. When it comes to ambition, Ted has plenty of that, now at 60 years of age, he has just finished building a house on the outskirts of Victoria, ready for when he and Nora retire.

Love of the sea must run somewhere in our veins, for three of my sons have been employed in the same type of work. Son David was light-keeper along with his wife Lou at various points on the coastline of Vancouver Island. I'm afraid I am unable to recall all the names, but that is not too important. My husband and I spent many of our holidays with them and their children. They have a family of eight, all of them married and with families. David has 16 grandchildren. British Columbia has a great appeal to them all. David has written and published poems in a small book called, "Of Sand and Sea".

Our son Fred also served as light-keeper at Tofino, B.C. Previously he served in the Canadian Navy, during World War II, and later on he was with the Merchant Marines and sailed the Seven Seas. At the present time he is working with Forestry Research. He has three children.

Roger, who lives in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, is married. He and his wife Joyce have a family of one girl, Susan, and twin boys, Leonard and Leslie. Two other children died as infants. Roger served in the Navy for several years, in his earlier years. Roger has managed his own business and has done quite well - in carpets and floor coverings.

I have mentioned all of our sons and now must speak for my daughters, not the least important by any means. Sylvia is married and has five children, one son and four daughters, and lives in Edmonton along with her husband, Robert Baker. She was born in England in 1928. Sylvia is still employed as a secretary with the Provincial Government. Bob Baker works as an auto mechanic and also farms three quarters of land.

Ruby lives in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and has seven children. Ruby was widowed twice and is now happily married to John Skaluba. She has six grandchildren.

Dorothy has four sons and one daughter, and four grandchildren. She lives in Edmonton with her husband, Norman Donald. Dorothy's sons are all carpenters in Edmonton.

Pat resides with her husband, Gene Potvin, and their family of six, three boys and three girls, and two grandchildren.

Daughter Beverley, the youngest of the family, has a family of four, two boys and two girls. One daughter is married. Bev and her husband, Ken, live on an acreage north of Westlock. Ken does a lot of work on road construction, so he and his sons are kept busy most of the time.

I think I have mentioned all my immediate family. In all, I have 78 grand and great-grandchildren at the moment.

When my husband, Billy, retired at the age of 65, we moved to Victoria. Billy passed away there on December 26, 1956, leaving ten children and myself, Violet E. Gardner.

Willard E. Garlock

by Adeline (Garlock) Kelly

My Dad, Willard E. Garlock, was born in Seneca, Kansas. His mother and father moved to Hanna, Alberta to take up farming in the early 1900's. There were five children, three girls and two boys. Grandfather died of food poisoning when Dad was 13 years old, and being the oldest, Dad helped his mother raise the younger ones. He went out to work to make money in the winters. When he was old enough, he joined the army during the First World War, sending most of his pay home. In the meantime, Grandmother remarried and moved from Hanna to the homestead of the new father, Shorty Lewis, northeast of Edmonton.

Later, when Dad was discharged from the army, he worked out for a few years, then came to Huallen and filed on a quarter of land. He met and married my mother, Lona Romine, on January 13, 1927. They had five children. I, Adeline, and brother Roy were born at Huallen.

In 1930, Dad and my grandfather, Jesse Romine, came to the Montney area, 16 miles north of Fort St. John, B.C., filed on a quarter of land, made some improvements and went back home. In the spring of 1931, they packed their belongings and came north to their new homestead to put in crops and clear more land. They loaded wagons, the Model A Ford cars, and tied their horses and a couple of cows behind the wagons for the trip. They had quite a time on the wet, dirt roads with the cars, and got stuck repeatedly. In places, they had to rough-lock the wheels. Eventually, the Garlocks and Romines got settled, and put up log cabins and barns with sod roofs.

A couple of years later, Dad got some logs out and some shingles and built another house, much bigger, and with shingles on the roof.

Later, three more children were born (a boy and two girls) in the Fort St. John hospital.

I, Adeline Garlock married Robert Kelly. We have eight children, some are married and one is still going to school. My husband homesteaded and then we bought Grandfather Jesse Romine's land, lived in their old log house until it burned down, then built a modern home. We have six grandchildren.

My brother, Roy, farmed for a while and still owns his own farm, but is living in Dawson Creek working as

foreman for B.C. Rail. He is married and has one boy who is going to school.

My sister, Dorothy, is married and has three children, two boys and a girl. The two oldest are finished school and on their own. The youngest is still going to school. Dorothy, whose married name is Arnold, lives in Fort St. John.

My younger brother, Fred, who was the third child, died when he was five years old.

My father sold his farm in 1969 and bought a house in Fort St. John. He passed away in November, 1970. My mother and father separated. A few years later, mother married John Laye, who has since passed away. Mother lives in Dawson Creek.

George Gordon

by Ed Breitkreutz

George, known to everyone as Gordon, was a bachelor, moving into the district in the early 1900's and homesteading three and one-half miles west of the present site of Wembley.

At one time, he owned three quarters of land, homesteading NE 7-71-8-W6, and having SE 7-71-8-W6 and NE 6-71-8-W6 as his South African Script.

His farm, being close to the road, made it a favorite stopping place for wearied settlers from Elmworth and Rio Grande districts, enroute to Grande Prairie, which was the end of the rail at that time.

The railroad came into Wembley in the later part of 1924.

George passed away on July 27, 1933 at the age of 60 years.

Matthew Graham and Others

by Elsie Wilson Denney

Mr. Graham (1878-1938) was more of a name than a person to me in my girlhood on our farm at location NW 18-71-8, west of Wembley.

Mr. Graham had the farm directly east of us but as far as I know, he didn't farm it. Instead he rented it to newcomers who needed a place to stay while searching for a farm of their own. In this way we met several very fine neighbors, who were neighbors for only a few months of the year.

First there came Mr. and Mrs. Bill Crowder. They were there for only the one winter. We never did discover what became of them. This couple was English.

Then came a large family by the name of Hess. We used to take a shortcut from our farm through this farm. We would join Carrie, Vern and Carl Hess and walk on the remaining three and a quarter miles to school. They occupied the farm for something more than a year, until they too, secured a place of their own. The Hess family were a German family.

Next came the McDougal family. They stayed only the one winter. Again, we walked to their place and joined them in our walk to Hillhead School. There was Nellie, John, Annie, Ida and Irene. They were a lovely Scottish family.

After that came the Ross family. I had finished school by then, but my younger sisters and brothers called for the two girls of this family for school.

Now I understand that the farm has been purchased by a Breitkreutz. I wish I could have known them also. Perhaps one day I will be privileged to do so.

Directly north of Matt Graham's place, lived Mr. George Miller, a bachelor and native of Switzerland. Later the Macdonald brothers, Murray and Donald bought his farm.

I don't know who owned the quarter section directly south of Matt Graham's quarter, but one year a very old lady lived there in a little old log barn, the only building of any sort on the place. It was on the bank of a little creek running anglewise through the place. She was tiny and pathetically poor in her existence. I remember finding her in this place on my way home from school one day. She had no bed, nor chair to sit upon. There was a large tin can or little barrel for a stove; a coffee pot and a tea pot sat on it. For a cupboard there was an apple box nailed to the wall at her height, with a cup, a plate, one spoon, one fork and one knife and a little enamel basin. She was all alone and her name was Mrs. Ramsay. Often she was hungry but never complaining. The little log building was situated on the southeast corner so it was handy to stop in on my way home from the Hillhead school. I would find wood around the creek for her and carry in some water for her in a pail I brought from our place. The Senior Irelands across the road had a small store and they saw to it that she had some food from time to time. She said she was waiting for her little boy to come home from working in the bush. He finally came in the spring. I was at her place when he came dragging his weary feet up the snow filled pathway. "Oh, dear little girl," she exclaimed, "here is my baby John home again!" Baby John was fifty-six years old. Soon after that, they left for the U.S.A., so we heard.

Directly south of our farm lived Clive Ireland and his family. They ran a stopping house for years and were well-liked by all who knew them. I remember what a trial it was for them getting enough water for their needs. Clive had a big water tank on a sleigh or a wagon, depending on the season. He would hitch four horses to this tank affair and then drive about 14 miles to a point on the Beaverlodge river to fill the tank with water. Sometimes he had to go once a day, depending on the number of teams going through, as the drivers stopped overnight there. Water was a real problem in this area.

Directly north of our quarter was the William Gardner quarter. Bill Gardner was a returned soldier from World War 1. He had filed on this quarter in 1911, before he went overseas. When he returned from the war, he brought a sweet little English bride home. Violet Gardner was so pretty with her golden hair and blue eyes - always sparkling and laughing, in spite of all the hardships she was to endure. The hardest of these was the loss of a little daughter, later. Her little "Betty" lies in the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery. They had a log house and a well on the corner of their farm quite close to our place. Later, however, they were able to purchase the old Bird homestead as it was known, just north of them, with the aid of the Soldier's Settlement Board. They then moved to that farm and built another house. This put them closer to the highway, and further from our place, but all the time we lived there we were good neighbors and friends. We still are. Billie Gardner died many years later out at the coast, where they had moved. Mrs. Vi Gardner is still living, and is well and strong and lovely in a new home with her second husband, Paul Gee in Edmonton.

Across the road allowance from the original Gardner homestead, lived Billie Blair, and across from the quarter the Gardner's had purchased lived John Blair. This was

due west from Billie and Vi Gardner's place. Billie Blair was well known as one of the earliest pioneers, and was well liked by all. He was the most efficient sort of a person in every way, such a good cook and clean housekeeper. Later, his brother John, tired of teaching school in the east, came west and took the farm on the north side of Billie's property. John was very shy and preferred the country life to the schoolroom. They both died in the Pioneer Lodge in Grande Prairie. (William Henry Blair, 1886-1975, and John L. Blair, 1890-1976).

Still across the road allowance to the west of us, and joining Billie Blair's farm to the south, was the old Charlie Blackburn homestead. He didn't live on it in my time, but rented it to a Mr. Art Verhaulst and his wife "Frenchie" as he called her. Later the Verhaulst's obtained their own farm further north. Just south of this farm and still on the west side of the road allowance, was a farm with a lot of low water lying on it. Here there were squatters, by the name of Al Henry and his wife and children. These folks were supposedly from Mexico and there was some secret reason they were there. However, they were not there too long, one summer and winter and part of the next spring.

Across the highway, north of the Blair farms, lived the Edward Reith family on SE 25-71-9-W6. Edward and Edith Reith had two daughters, Muriel and Doris. Mr. and Mrs. Reith are gone now, but the daughters, Mrs. Muriel Robinson and Mrs. Harry Chillman, both live in Edmonton.

When my grandfather, Peter C. Wilson, was 73 years of age, he filed on a homestead SW 25-71-9 right next to the Reith farm on the west side of it. Although he proved it up, he never lived on it. He lived in Ontario all winter and came to our place in the summer. He died in Ontario in 1923.

Still across the highway situated just east of the Edward Reith farm, was the Ben Austin couple. Ben and little wife, Gertie, were childless, but loved children and young folk. It was not uncommon to find their home filled with young people dancing to the tunes that "Ben and Gertie" played on their guitar and mandolin. Their headstone stands proudly in the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery.

Going east again, across the road allowance and directly east of the once George Miller farm, lived Alex Muir, a bachelor. Later Mr. Muir married the widow of Jim Howard who had died as a result of an accident. Jim Howard was the brother of Mrs. Neil McDougal. Mr. and Mrs. Howard had taken little Gordon Mates into their own childless life, after Gordon's mother died. Mr. Mates, Sr. was a brother of Mrs. Catherine Howard, wife of Jim Howard. Gordon later became an elevator man at Sexsmith.

What a delightful little neighborhood we had, and what a comfort each neighbor was to the other.

As for Matt Graham, although he never lived on his farm, (he ran the livery barn in Lake Saskatoon), everyone knew of him. Certainly because of him, we met some very fine people through the years, and were pleased that he was running such a successful livery barn business in Lake Saskatoon while that was a thriving community.

Valentine and Louise Hennig

Valentine Hennig's folks, Caroline and Valentine, came to Canada from Austria via Chicago, Illinois. In 1908, he homesteaded at Golden Spike. In 1926, Valentine, Sr. heard about the great crops Herman Trelle was getting in the Peace River country and settled down in Wembley with others of German Lutheran descent.

Their son, Valentine, had finished his Grade VIII schooling at Golden Spike when they made the move and began at once to help his father on the land. As there were no other boys in the family, Valentine took over the family farm, when his father died in 1934. His mother, Caroline Kullman Hennig, lived in her own home on the farm with two daughters, Esther and Edna, until her death in 1958. Her daughter-in-law paid tribute to her saying, "She was a hard worker, and easy to get along with." They all loved her.



Val and Louise Hennig, wedding day, August 10, 1936.

Val married Louise Enders from Stony Plain in 1936. Louise Enders, daughter of Henry and Theresa Enders, had two sisters and six brothers. Her father had bought land in the German Lutheran settlement when that group made its influx into the region in 1927 and on. His son, Carl, farmed the land for four years, and then Val Hennig took over.

In August, 1935, Val had a Model T Ford which he drove out to Edmonton to bring home his bride. Those were the days, when travelling along Lesser Slave Lake, you took your chances on getting to Edmonton. The lake had flooded across the road in such a manner that you drove a short way on high ground, then took a scow across the flood waters to the next high spot and repeated the process. One such high spot, a stretch of half a mile, was referred to as "The Isle of Capri" after the popular song of the time.

When Val reached this spot in the road on his wedding trip it was late in the evening. The first scow was still in operation, but the second one had quit for the night. If he wanted back, there'd be no place close by to stay, so Val and Louise elected to take the first scow to the first island. There they bedded down with blankets in the car to spend one night of their honeymoon on an island in the middle of the highway.

Val and Louise raised four boys, two sets of twins. Ken and Keith were born in 1937, Donald and Douglas in 1941.



Val and Louise with Keith and Ken, 1937.

The Hennigs have been strong church supporters. Val was an elder of St. John's Lutheran Church several times and chairman of the Board. It was during one of his tenures of office that the new church was built at Huallen.

Louise didn't have to help with outside work with five males in the house. She did love her garden though. She had a small plastic covered greenhouse, which gave her much pleasure. She started the smaller seeds in the house, transplanting them to the greenhouse in mid-April and then outside as they were ready. The boys kept her pretty busy; she had one pair in the carriage and one pair in mischief. She said they always came in "just oozing with dirt."

When Val Hennig was first persuaded to run as councillor in 1958, he had had no thought of it prior to the day before nomination. That day, John Bunyan, of Wembley, came to him with the nomination papers all filled out and ready for his signature. At first, he didn't think he would care for public office but as time went on he met so many people, and made so many friends (and perhaps a few enemies), that he found the task very satisfying and most challenging. Val was councillor for Wembley division for six years, then municipal chairman for four years and county reeve for six years, sixteen years in total. He retired to Grande Prairie after that, in 1974.

Asked what his greatest satisfaction had been while in county work, he replied, "I always hoped we would be able to gravel all the roads that led to people's residences. The day that was accomplished, was a highlight for me."

While Val did council work, his boys pitched in on the farm. Though Ken was working as a station agent in Spirit River in 1956, he was home weekends and holidays, helping whenever he was needed. When Doug and Don took over the farming, they rented two more quarters, and worked them with Val's three. Eventually, Don and Doug set themselves up in trucking business, while Keith works for Proctor and Gamble, and Ken has a hamburger stand in Valleyview.

Ken married Alice Adolphson of Valleyview and they have two children. Keith works on the pulp driers for P & G, is married and has three girls. Don and Doug are married and have families, Don, a boy and girl, Doug has a girl.

Val and Louise left the farm in 1975 and moved into Grande Prairie, where they are close to their children. Val thinks there's no better place to be than here in this Peace River country. He is an ardent outdoors man; he loves the wild country and is never happier than when he is out roughing it, close to Mother Nature, which probably explains his fascination with the Peace, where there are still some areas for him to explore and admire in its natural state.

Joseph and Olive Kuntz

by Joseph Kuntz

My life with Olive (Nilsson) began in October, 1956, and we made our first home in Valemount, B.C., where I worked as sawyer in a lumber camp for Clarence Johnson.

Dad moved to Grande Prairie, and in 1957, he signed his land over to his sons, giving each a quarter. I was given the home place, where my folks had lived.

Our first daughter, Victoria May, was born in McBride, B.C. on February 1, 1959. That spring, the end of March, we decided to move back to Wembley and make our home on the farm, trying our hand at farming during the summer and working the lumber camps, south of Grande Prairie, in the winters. Olive and family moved out with me every fall and then back in the spring, until Vicky was old enough to go to school.

On December 12, 1960, Karen Gail was born. Vicky was delighted now, with having a playmate.

1961 found us brushing and breaking the rest of the farm (home quarter) for more land. At that time I worked in Grande Prairie as a carpenter all day, and spent my evenings picking roots. We bought my brother Paul's land, which joined ours to the north, the next year, which meant more brushing and breaking and picking roots. There were many years of long hours, farming and holding down a job.



The Joseph Kuntz family, L. to R.: Vicki, Joe, Darlene, Olive, Corinne and Karen.

Also in this year, on May 20, 1962, another daughter was born. Darlene Rose, made a total of three little girls, of which we were very proud. As a child, she ate poison, but was spared by the goodness of the Lord.

In 1956, the year Dad passed away, our fourth daughter, Glenda Colleen was born in November.

In 1967, we built a new home one-half mile north of the old site, where we live at present.

When Glenda started school, Olive decided she wanted to take in foster children, which we have done for several years. At present, we have two lovely children, Ann and Henry.

On August 11, 1979, Victoria married Larry Yelinek, and they now reside in Edmonton.

Karen, a dental assistant, lives in Edmonton also.

Darlene graduated from high school in 1980 and is working in Grande Prairie.

Glenda is in Grade nine at Wembley School.

We still farm, are a little older and wiser with a bit of white hair to show for it, but have been very happy here at Wembley. We praise the Lord for our four beautiful daughters.

The Karol Kuntz Family

by Joseph Kuntz

Dad, Karol Kuntz, first had the desire to come to America long before we came to Canada. My father's first trip to North America was in 1912. He left Russia with some friends who paid his way, also two of Mother's sisters, Mrs. Molly Weber and Lydia Schaefer. They left with the intention of bringing Mother over, after Father was able to repay his fare and save enough for hers, but during that time, the "Titanic" sank. "The Unsinkable Ship". It was then Mother decided never to cross the Atlantic.



Karl Kuntz children with a friend.
Back row - L. to R.: Joe, the Diederich boy, and Paul.
Front row: Daniel and Pauline.

In 1914, Father went back to Russia to bring Mother to the United States, but shortly after returning there, World War 1 broke out. Father, being a trained man, who had spent three years in the service, was called into the army, spending the next four years in the revolution. It was during these years that two of my sisters and one brother, died. Following the war, hard times hit the nation; starvation and diseases broke out. After countless heartaches, my mother finally consented to come to the New World. By this time, immigration into the United States was impossible, but Father didn't give up. He then decided to try to come to Canada, which took some time, but eventually, in the spring of 1929, we came. Mom, Dad, Bertha, Paulina, Paul, Joseph, Albertine and Daniel said goodbye to Poland and were on our way, arriving in Halifax, July 27. Then it was on to Wembley, arriving August 6, where we were met by Mr. Ernest Breitkreutz, Sr. We stayed a few days at the Breitkreutz home, and later were given a vacant house, which belonged to Ernest, to live in.

Only a few weeks after arriving here, tragedy struck again. My younger sister, Albertine, died at the age of three years.

Upon coming to Wembley, Father had only $100 left. He purchased a cow from Andy Pitchko, for $80.

His first work in Canada was stooking for Soren Fredricksen at $3.50 a day. We experienced hard times from then on and only the help and kindness of our neighbours, especially Mrs. Georgina Smith, brought us through our first winter.

In January of 1931, Father purchased the SW 5-71-8-W6, but for the next few years hardship hit all the early settlers, as the depression was upon us all. One pair of shoes was shared for trips to the out house. Our home, being close to the road, was a hospitality centre for all who passed by. Survival meant helping each other.

It was in 1930, that Paulina and Paul went to the Aspen Ridge School for one year, but the language barrier was a problem. I started in 1932 to St. Johns Lutheran School, and having the two languages to learn was really difficult at first.

In 1932, my youngest sister, Gertrude was born.

Father farmed at Wembley until 1947, retiring to Grande Prairie. For the next two years, my parents were janitors at the United Church.

Following Father's death in 1956, at the age of 79 years, Mother moved to Chilliwack, B.C. for five or six years. Later she returned to the Peace River country, and at present resides at Heritage Lodge, in her 89 year.



The Kuntz family, Joseph, Paul, Pauline, Dad, Mother, and Gertie, 1961.

My sister Bertha, married (Jackson) Felix Pitchko in October, 1939 and is now residing in Prince George, B.C. They have two sons.

Pauline married Conrad Rubie, January, 1940. They had three daughters and a son, and now reside in Wembley.

Paul married Elizabeth Farquhar, June 1956 and is residing in Grovedale, Alberta, with one daughter and one son.

I, Joseph, married Olive Nilsson in October, 1956, and we live in Wembley. We have four daughters.

Daniel married Theresa Schmidt, in August, 1963. They are now living in Grovedale, with their four sons and two daughters.

Gertrude married Earl Nilsson in November, 1952. They make their home in Grovedale also with two sons and two daughters.

At present, the Kuntz family has 22 grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald MacNeill

by Anne Paul

Mr. and Mrs. Donald MacNeill and family left their native land, Campbelltown, Scotland, and immigrated to Canada in the year of March 27, 1927. They arrived in Wembley, Alta. in April, 1927.

The first few winters, Dad worked in the coal mines for Buck Schanuel at the Red Willow, and Nick Snyder of the Wapiti. He then drove the school bus for a couple of years. Every fall, "Mac" went out with Gust Gitzel's threshing outfit. He farmed till 1950, when the farm was sold, and then retired to Wembley, where he was caretaker at the Curling Rink for a couple of years.



Mr. and Mrs. Donald MacNeill's 50th wedding anniversary, at the farm, 1953.

"Mac", as he was known to all his friends, and his wife Margaret, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary, July 3, 1953, together with five daughters, one son, and grandchildren, relatives and friends.

Dad passed away in the year 1959, and Mother, in 1964. Two sons died, Peter, in 1971 and Pte. Ronald, killed in Ortona, Italy, in 1943. Five daughters, Mrs. Jean Penney, Mrs. Anne Paul of Grande Prairie, Mrs. Mary Cooper, Mrs. Cathie Christofferson of Wembley, and Mrs. Isabel Cooper of Cedar, B.C. make up the rest of the family. There are twenty-four grandchildren.

Frank Rennie

by Margaret Anderson

Frank Rennie was a friend of ours who lived on the banks of the creek north of us. He was a bachelor who had come to Wembley from Saskatchewan.

I was going to school then and I remember him coming to our place and spending a lot of time with Dad. They would play checkers into the wee hours of the morning. At nights, after we were in bed and the house was quiet, we would listen to the sound of the checkers shuffling across the board. Some of the games lasted so long, that Frank would just be leaving when Mother was getting up to prepare breakfast and school lunches.

He had four beautiful Clydesdale horses and raised chickens and turkeys. The times he would leave to work at the homestead or go to Saskatchewan, I was hired to feed his chickens. That was something I really enjoyed. I can remember walking along my favorite little path, which wound around the creek bank, with hard-boiled eggs, fine chop, and sometimes rolled oats.

When Mother brought out her knitting machine to make long stockings and men's socks, she often made Frank a pair too. He was a quiet, friendly and helpful man. Neighbours like him, were the ones who made the early days in this country memorable.

The last I recall of him, was his moving to Grande Prairie. We lost a fine neighbour and a good friend when he left.

Jesse Romine Family

by Adeline (Garlock) Kelly

Jesse F. Romine was born in Iowa, and married Isabella M. Stone, born in Texas. They had eight children. The first three died leaving four boys: Harold, Lorne, Merle and Earl, and one girl, Lona.

Jesse, Isabella and family along with his mother and stepfather, Etta and George Ferguson and son Claude, left the States in 1912, coming over the Edson Trail by covered wagon, arriving at Lake Saskatoon in March 1913. Some of the children rode horseback on the trip.

The family settled along the Wapiti River, then moved to Wembley.

Jesse freighted in the winter, going to Edmonton, and farmed in the summer. Isabella ran a cook shack for threshers in the fall, moving to each farm along with the threshing machine, while my mother, who was Lona, had to look after the small children.

They were settled around the Wapiti when the flu epidemic hit in 1918 or 1919. I'm not sure which year it was, but the whole family was down with the flu, except Jesse and son Harold. Jesse went to the different houses to help with chores and things, as the whole country was down sick.

Mother was married, in 1927, to my dad, Willard Garlock.

In the spring of 1930, Jesse and my dad came north to Fort St. John to file on homesteads. They located 16 miles north of Fort St. John, each filing on a quarter of land, joining each other in the Montney district. They did some work on their land, then Jesse returned to the Wembley area and Dad to Huallen.

In the spring of 1931, both families packed up their belongings and headed for their homesteads, driving Model A Ford cars, plus horses pulling wagons and belongings, leading horses and a cow or two. They had quite a bit of trouble with the cars getting stuck in the mud. They got settled, put some crop in and cleared more land. A fellow by the name of Lars Quittam, who had been staying with the Romines, accompanied them to the Peace River country and made his home with them here in Montney.

After Romines got settled, the oldest boys, Lorne and Harold each filed on a quarter of land in the Montney district, one joining the parents and the other one a half mile away. Their friend, Lars Quittam, also filed on a quarter, two miles west of the Montney store.

When September came, the two younger boys went to school.

Lorne married, had one boy, and then he and his wife parted. He went back to the United States to stay with relatives and worked down there until joining the American army when World War 2 broke out. When the war was over, he moved back to B.C. and settled at Quesnel where he became sick in 1972.

Harold and Lorne married sisters. Annie and Harold had two boys, one of which drowned in a basement which was being dug. It had rained and had quite a bit of water in it, before the framework of the house was put up. Their other son is married and has four children.

Merle filed on land when he was old enough and sold it quite a few years ago and is now living in Nova Scotia.

The other boy, Earl, had land also, but lost it and is now living at Prince George.

Isabella died about 1948. Jesse moved up to Hudson Hope and lived there a few years. I think he died about 1950 or 1955. They are both buried in the Montney cemetery.

When Lorne became sick, he came back to the Peace River area to be in the Fort St. John hospital so he would be near his family. He is buried in the Montney cemetery also.

Fred and Caroline Schellenberger

by Emilia Breitkreutz

Fred and Caroline Schellenberger arrived in Wembley from Golden Spike, near Stony Plain, on June 9, 1930. Fred, of Austrian descent, was born at Stony Plain. Caroline came from Austria as an infant, with her parents.

Caroline and the children, along with their goods and livestock travelled by rail, while Fred set out with the car for Wembley. After heavy rains flooded roads near Slave Lake preventing him from getting through for almost a week, the family stayed at Peter Unterschultzes to await his arrival.

They lived near Huallen in the old Heikel house until they got a quarter of their own, SW 18-71-8-6, about three miles west of Wembley bought from Mr. Philip Hennig.



The Schellenbergers arriving in Wembley.

In 1945, they moved to Vernon, then returned again to Wembley in 1957 and lived there until retiring to Grande Prairie in 1966, where Mother still resides. The Schellenberger land is now occupied by Hugh and Doris Dinsey.

Emilia, the eldest of the Schellenberger children, married Herman Breitkreutz, and has two sons. Walter died at an early age. Albert remained single. A second daughter, Freida, married Carl Breitkreutz, and a third daughter, Norma, is now Mrs. Jack Meyer. All, except Milton, who married Wilma Schultz from Germany, and works for the Department of Immigration in Ottawa, established homes in the Wembley and Huallen districts.

On March 7, 1976, Fred and Caroline celebrated their Diamond Anniversary, which was also the last time the family was together.

Dad passed away August 21, 1976 in Grande Prairie at the age of 83.



Fred and Caroline Schellenberger, and family, 1963.

Henry and Catherine Taylor

by Margaret Anderson and Donald Taylor

Our parents, Henry and Catherine Taylor, came to Wembley, Alberta from Stirlingshire, Scotland, May 26, 1928. With them, they brought five sons and five daughters (two tiny sisters had previously passed away before we left Scotland) and a black collie dog, Donn.

I, Margaret, had previously started school in Scotland, but Donald began in Wembley, as did Willie. Ina registered at Klondyke Trail, for her first school term. We were almost three miles from Wembley, and walked those three miles, morning and afternoon, summer and winter. I was in Grade three (called Class 3 in Scotland) and attended school at Wembley United Church. There, I soon had the misfortune of being strapped, along with some other unfortunate classmates, because I had entered the school, without permission, attempting to shelter from a rain storm. Otto Kirscht, one of our few, and a rather big fellow at that, closed his hand on the strap, when it came his turn for punishment, and refused to let go. For me, that was a sober introduction of schools in Canada, and I was to learn before the end of the year, that I wouldn't be the only one to receive harsh punishment.

Although leisure time was limited, it was no less enjoyable. Summer fun consisted of riding bicycles (we each had our own), paddling in the nearby creek, playing ball or hide-and-go-seek, and then if we were really lucky, sitting down to a huge bowl of ice-cream, home-made, especially for us by big sister Kate and her husband Bill Watson. A delicious treat!



The Taylor family and friends, 1930's.

In 1933, the Klondyke Trail School District was formed and our land and home being in that district, we began attending the small school, which was erected on a portion of the Gust Gitzel land. Now that we were enrolled at Klondyke Trail, along with our neighbors, the Kopp, Craig and White families, we had lots of company on the dark mornings, when arriving at school on time meant leaving home very early.

While we were busy getting an education, our father and mother were equally as busy finding ways to make a living. It didn't take our father long to purchase a milk cow from Frank Boyd, and four beautiful horses (two of them Clydesdale, one Percheron, and the other Belgian) from Finlay Watson. He was very proud of those horses. Our brother, John, (we called him Jock) saved his money and bought a spirited black team (Jimmy and Dick). He loved to drive those horses on the threshing gangs, and fed and groomed them caringly. I can remember clearly a set of red, white and blue spreaders which he often dressed them up with. I can also remember Matt Graham, who owned the livery stable in Wembley, offering advice about how to feed them, and Jock acknowledging the advice politely, but always doing it the way he saw fit of course. Jock really enjoyed life, which was cut short for him. He passed away, a young man, June 18, 1939. That was the first great loss to us all. We missed him so much. He was the second oldest boy.

Our oldest sister, Elizabeth, who had polio when she was three years old, spent most of her time at home doing housework, enabling our Mother to do outside chores. She later married William Craig in August, 1932, and shared a happy life with him. He could have told a wonderful story had he still been with us, but passed away on November 21, 1973 at the age of 95. Elizabeth died December 23, 1973, about a month later. They had no family.

Cecilia, the second oldest daughter, spent most of her Canadian life in Edmonton, going there in March, 1929, to work at Government House. She worked at one or two other jobs before securing a position with Johnstone Walkers, where she was employed for 35 years. She then retired to the farm in 1976, where she and Donald have a lovely home.

Catherine, third daughter, also spent time working in Edmonton at Government House. She married William Watson in November, 1931. They farmed at Wembley and later, he became agent for the U.F.A. CO-OP Service Station there. They had two children, Donald, the present Postmaster in Wembley, and daughter Diane, who is living in Elk Point.

Peter, the eldest son, farmed at home and then married Agnes Smith. They eventually took over the Smith farm, where they are still farming. Two sons were born to them. Bryan, who is a heavy-duty mechanic, also farms, and Leigh operates a business in Fort Nelson, B.C.

Henry, better known as "Harry" is the third eldest son. He worked at home, before joining the army where he spent at least four years. Upon returning home, he married Helen McNab. They still reside on the farm he bought just a short distance from our home-place. Helen has taught at the Wembley School for many years. They have two daughters, Donna and Lynne in Edmonton, and a son, Craig, farming, and working out when time permits.

I, Margaret, started out doing day-work, nine to five, for $1 per day. Needless to say, I was more satisfied when I finally began working for Mr. Robert Kranz, owner of the Wembley Department Store, whom I believed to be the best boss ever. The pay was much better, and what a good time we all had! Bob, Lawrence and Charlie Cowpar were all considered bosses actually, and during lunch hours, when we were all clowning around, Charlie would walk in and say, "When the cat's away, the mice will play." If we were to ask him his opinion about a blouse or dress we were thinking of buying, and he thought the coloring was too bright, he would say, "No fancy colors for me, just plain red and yellow!" I had many memories, as I watched the old store burn down last summer.

I married Henry Anderson, who was then joint owners, with Albert and George, of the South Wapiti Lumber Company in Wembley. We had two daughters, Carrie (married to Stephen Burgess with three children, Michael, Ryan and Kristin), and Cecile. Henry passed away January 8, 1978.

William, the fourth oldest boy, after successfully completing Grade 12, was asked by the local school inspector, to supervise at Two Rivers School, there being a shortage of qualified teachers during wartime. He also supervised very capably at Lake Saskatoon, and looks back on those days fondly. He then moved to Grande Prairie to work as assistant secretary to the town, and was bookkeeper at the school. He was also employed with R.J. Karen Plum-



Mrs. Catherine Taylor at Henry and Margaret's first home in Wembley, with five of her grandchildren, L. to R.: Carrie and Cecile Anderson, Craig, Donna and Lynne Taylor.

bing & Heating there. Presently, he sells machinery for Northwest Farm Equipment, in Fort St. John, B.C. and acts as landlord for the apartment in which he resides. Recently Willie had a chance to renew friendships with some of his former pupils, at the South Peace Centennial Museum Day in Beaverlodge, where he was asked to speak during the dedication ceremony of the original Two Rivers School.

Donald, the fifth eldest, has followed in the footsteps of his father, by being a very conscientious and capable farmer. He has worked on the home-place for 40 years, and much appreciates the helpfulness and consideration extended to him by his close neighbor, Joseph Kuntz. Enlarging and rebuilding the original family home has kept him busy in his spare time.

Ina, our youngest sister and youngest of the family, also worked in the Wembley Department Store. She was first employed by Alex Mitchell, from Dawson Creek, who purchased the store from Robert Kranz, and then another owner, Gerd Rauntenstrauch. No doubt, she has many happy memories as well. Ina married Gerald Cameron, present operator of the Wembley Seed Cleaning Association Plant, and they have four children. Greg, in Edmonton, who will soon achieve the status of a chartered accountant, Dennis, employed with Robert Sieker, local U.F.A. CO-OP agent, Muriel, attending college in Grande Prairie, and Faye, attending high school in Beaverlodge.

Our father passed away on March 15, 1941, Mother, August 30, 1957.

Through all of our memories are the personal and human feelings which cannot be told in words, but are certainly felt and recognized by all who shared family experiences similar to or different than our own. May we be thankful for the sharing, caring, never swearing, homefolks, our parents.

The John Walton Family

John and Mary Walton and seven children had a store in Toronto, Ontario until they decided to come to the Peace River Country in 1910. With some of the families known as the Bull Outfit they came to Alberta over the Athabasca Trail with oxen and settled in the Lower Beaverlodge area. Ted Schoepp now lives on their old homestead. Their first house was log until in later years they hired Frank Willsey to build their new two storey house. This house is still on the Ted Schoepp place. After John Walton passed away, their son Arthur farmed until he joined the army. Mary Walton died in 1950.

Irene married Robert Steele and had one son. Arthur married Agnes Gibson in Scotland, during the World War II. Jim married Eda Edgerton and had two children, Nellie and Jessie never married. Louise married Invold Volden and they have two sons. Kathleen married Cecil Penny and they are blessed with three children. All are deceased except Arthur Walton, Louise Volden and Kathleen Penny.

The E.C. Wilson Family

by Elsie (Wilson) Denney

Our parents, Ernest and Harriet Wilson, arrived in the Grande Prairie area, following our grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. William Gilmour. We too, left Port Robinson, Ontario as they did. Indeed, that is how we came to know about the great Peace River Country. It was a long trip for young children I suppose, but we didn't seem to mind that much. There were six of us. I was the eldest, Elsie Wilson, then came Bertha, Jack, Mary, Jean and Helen. In 1918, our youngest brother, George, was born, making a total of seven children in the Wilson family.



L. to R.: Helen, Jean and Mary Wilson, Helen McDougall, George and Mabel Gilmour, Jack and George Wilson. Mrs. E.C. Wilson is holding baby Kathleen Gilmour.

We arrived on the first train into Grande Prairie, on March 16, 1916. This was really a freight train with a coach added on somewhere to hold a few passengers. My mother was the only woman and we, the only children. The railway was called the E.D. & B.C. This was supposed to have stood for Edmonton Dunvegan and British Columbia, but my Dad named it the "Exceedingly Dangerous and Badly Constructed Railway". Dad had been an engineer on the C.P.R. for years, till his health failed.

We were met in the late afternoon at the Grande Prairie Station by Grandma and Grandpa Gilmour (who had gone over the Edson Trail in 1911), with a covered sleigh to take us west to their farm, about sixteen miles. This covered sleigh was drawn by two bay colored horses - Bill and Jim, the same team which had brought my grandparents and two uncles, over the Edson Trail in 1911.

We stayed with Grandma and Grandpa on their farm till a suitable house was built for us on the homestead Dad filed on about three miles west of our grandparents.

The homestead bore the legal description, NW 18-71-8-W6. On this quarter section they built a frame house 24 feet square and two stories high. Dad worked at the Vanhorne Mill to get the necessary lumber for building. While at the mill, he had an accident where he lost two first fingers and the thumb of his right hand. This was pretty bad, and add that to his ill health, he had a bad time.

Someone loaned us a team of mules to put with the horses to do some breaking, and we finally managed a garden plot. I had learned to drive this mis-matched team and got along very well. After the garden was broken we managed to break 40 acres for grain. That was the beginning of our farm life.

We soon discovered that there was one very serious drawback to our new way of life - lack of water. In the spring, the slough to the west of us looked after some of our needs and we were invited to get our drinking water from the farm of William H. Blair. He had a fine well and was very generous about sharing it. My uncle George made me a yoke to fit my shoulders and I was able to carry two pails of water which was hung on the hooks at either end of the yoke, at the end of a strong wire. Here we had our drinking water just for the taking - and walking a quarter of a mile each way to do so. I made many many trips in this manner till our well was dug.

Coming from Ontario, in a quiet little village, we were indeed "greenhorns" to a new style of living. We learned fast. With my father's poor health, we children were called upon to do more than is sometimes usual in families of young ones. That story would make a book in itself.

As the eldest, and having just turned ten years of age, I hoped and longed for a school and books to look at. I had gone to school in Ontario, therefore I missed it the more. Many times I asked the grown-ups about getting a school for us, but no one had any money.

My mind was made up. I had heard of another new family who had come in July of 1916, an Irish family by the name of Watson. I had heard too, how capable and interested in community life that Mr. John Watson was and that he was a gentleman. All these things registered in my mind. So one day, I slipped away and walked to his farm, some three miles east and south of our farm. He chuckled at my request, in his delightful Irish way, and tried to tell me that no one had any money for schools and to run along and be glad that we had food to eat. I told him about an old barn I had passed enroute. It was at the top of a ravine of a creek we called Geisler's creek. (In reality it was the northern end of Pipestone Creek, I was told). The barn was of logs, less its original building chinking and no door, nor was there a floor, but couldn't we use that building I coaxed? The upshot of that little visit was, that the grown-ups, under Mr. John Watson's leadership, set to work. A stove was brought from somewhere, a door was hung, and a window was cut out on the east side of the old building. We never did get a floor. Logs were cut as evenly as possible and planks nailed across these to make desks - long ones. The same thing was done for the seats, only this time cutting these pieces of logs shorter. It was pretty cold in winter to be sure, but we only spent one winter in this school, and had to sit through the day with outside clothes on for extra warmth. But that was fine; we had our beloved school.

A young teacher was persuaded to come to us. A darling young girl just out of Normal School in another part of Alberta, although her home was further west in the Hythe area. We shall always remember with pleasure and gratitude our Miss Margaret McNaught. She made such a happy occasion out of hardships, as they were called. One thing we all liked so much was the way she thought of, to slide down the ravine. She had ridden her beautiful horse, Napoleon, to Grande Prairie and brought us each back a black oilcloth school bag with handles, from Crummys' Hardware. She showed us how to sit on these bags with the handles between our legs where we could grip them easily. The oilcloth was smooth and slipped down the ravine so easily. The fun of it all! But poor Miss McNaught was short of one for herself, so nothing daunted, she sat on the grain shovel used to take out ashes, etc. and with the handle gripped tightly with both her hands she would slide down swiftly with the rest of us. Sometimes all you could see of her was the handle of the shovel up between her legs with snow flying in all directions. What fun!

By the next year, a frame school house had been built farther east on this same road, and a short distance from the Watson farm. It was, to us the ultimate in grandeur. A nice clean tidy building with mose of the west side in windows. What luxury - and such a promoter of daydreams. Days when the sun shone in, hot and glaring, one could sit and dream of many wonderful things, till jarred into reality by the teacher's admonition to get on with our work. We used slates for the most part. A scribbler was a real luxury and not many had one. Mind you, some of us cut up wrapping paper into squares and sewed them together to make fancy scribblers. This way, one could keep their work for reference. This applied mostly to stories and poems. There was such a shortage of books for sometime after the school was opened.

It was a long walk for some, so only the older ones who could manage to walk that distance attended. Later a shed was built for the horses, and those who could, rode horseback; sometimes two or three on a horse.

For a time teachers came only on a part-time basis. Teachers were not all that available. In my time there was a Mrs. Skillen, a Mrs. Pearce, who was no longer young, sometimes Mr. Watson filled in. Outside of Miss Margaret McNaught, of whom we all shared a devotion, the one everyone liked so much was Mr. Fred Barber. He came at the end of World War 1, after his discharge from the army. He was well liked by all - students and parents alike.

I shall attempt to name a few of the families represented at school: The Gardners, Hess', McDougalls, Irelands, Deans, ourselves, "the Wilsons", Eleanor Kenney, Violet and Eva Mills, Carlin and Lavier Jensen, Crystal, Marie and Ethelyn Brooks, the Stewart boys, Kent boys, the Conleys (John, Lawrence, Glenn, Jean and Frances - their mother was a daughter of Silver Tip Campbell), Agnes Watson, Gordon Mates, Agnes Smith, the Wood boys, Bert and Willie (The Wood boys were first cousins of the Wilsons. They lived across the road from Clive Ireland's farm). Our lovely school was called Hillhead School.

After grade eight, I left and later my brother Jack drove a funny looking rig called a van, when he took the children from our end of the district.

The first wedding of the district where I attended, was that of my special friend Nellie McDougall and Sidney Watson, June 9, 1926. There was a heavy snowstorm in progress that day, but it never dampened anyone's spirits,

so nothing shadowed their happiness. In Oliver, British Columbia, on June 5, 1976, they had a grand celebration, marking their 50th wedding anniversary. In November, 1979, Sidney passed away.

Of doctors and medical sources in those days, we had too few. Dr. McDonald was in Lake Saskatoon and Dr. O'Brien in Grande Prairie. There was à dentist and a small hospital in Grande Prairie at that time. I can assure you, it was well to keep in good health in those days.



The E.C. (Ernest) Wilson family, L. to R.: Elsie, Jack, Mary, Bertha, (Mrs. Wilson hiding), and Mr. Wilson.
Front row: George, Helen and Jean.

Back to the Wilson family: Elsie married Howard D. Colby of Edmonton. There were three children, Shirley, Joyce and Douglas. In June, 1966, Howard died. By this time, children of the marriage were themselves all married and living at the coast. In November, 1974, Elsie married Charles Douglas Denney.

Bertha married Albert White and they too, lived in Edmonton. Bertha died August 9, 1975. They have two children, Albert, Jr. and William.

Jack married Grace Love. They had five children, Sheila, John, Keith, Gail and Doreen, all married now. Keith lives at Silver Valley, Alberta, and is in the honey business. The others are all in B.C. Jack and Grace live in Kelowna, B.C.

Mary married Lee H. Moschenross of Red Deer. They had three daughters - Betty, Helen and Doreen, all married now.

Jean married Walter Fletcher. They had five children. Jim, now of Grande Prairie, (Accountant) Donna, Janet, Mary and John. All are married. Walter is gone now.

Helen married J. Aubrey Robertson. They had three children, Nancy, William (Bill) and Hugh, all married. Aubrey is gone also. He died July 21, 1978.

Helen, Jean and myself all live here in Edmonton.

George married Marguerite Deschamps and they had three daughters, Vivian, Sandy and Judy. Marguerite died. While in England as an instructor in signalling, George met and married Elsie Stott, during World War 2. They now live at Chilliwack, B.C.

Our Dad, Mr. Ernest Wilson died in June 1933 and is buried here in Edmonton. Our Mother, Mrs. Harriet (Gilmour) Wilson, died December 28, 1967, and is also buried in Edmonton.



Mr. and Mrs. E.C. Wilson, 1922.

Chapter 8: Lucky Tree





Lucky Tree School District No. 4945

by Mrs. Yvonne MacAlister and Mrs. Eileen Wald

August 11, 1947 the Minister of Education ordered the establishment of Luckey Tree School District No. 4945, namely:

"In Township 71, Range 7, West of the Sixth Meridian:-

All of Sections 1, 2, and 3

In Township 70, Range 7, West of the Sixth Meridian:-

All of Sections 25, 26, 34, 35, and 36; the East half of Section 33; those portions of the NW quarter and the East half of Section 24 lying North and East of the Wapiti River

In Township 70, Range 6, West of the Sixth Meridian:-

SW quarter of Section 31; and the West halves of Sections 19 and 30"

and ordered that the above-named school district be included in subdivision 1 of Grande Prairie School Division No. 14.

Have you wondered how the school name was chosen? That first September four children from the Luckey family and five from the Greentree family are listed in the school register making almost half the total attendance of 20. Now you've guessed it!

Pupils of the district had a two-week extension of their summer vacation since the school was not ready for occupancy until Monday, September 15. School classes began that day with Miss Audrey Sutherland as supervisor.

Miss Suzanne Pivert assumed supervising duties in September 1948 and newcomers were Mary Beaulieu in Grade one, Lillian Kapusta in Grade four, and Erna Fehr and Philip Latos in Grade five. Fehrs lived on Mrs. H. Luckey's land.

1949 brought Miss Edith Olstad as teacher and the new "Grade ones" were Catherine George, Johnny Gibney, David Greentree, William Luckey, and twins, Paul and Paulette Pivert. Gilbert and Florence Mitchell attended since Millarston School had closed at the end of June, 1949.

In September 1950, school opened with Miss Bernice Willis as teacher. William George began Grade one and



Setting up the swings at the Luckey Tree school. (1947-48) - Had Aseltine, Gaby, Dick Greentree, Billy Walters, Iola Greentree, Mrs. Walters, Edith Luckey, Pauline Gibney, Mrs. Pivert, Margaret Aseltine, Bud Luckey, Frank Gibney, Bud Rintoul, Wid Rintoul, Willie Gibney in front of his dad.



First pupils at the Luckey Tree school (1947-48).
Back: L. - R. Louise Greentree, Gwen Walters, Phyllis Luckey, Yvonne Pivert, Jack Greentree, Gordon Davis.
Centre: Dorothy Luckey, Florence Luckey.
Front: Fay Cumber, Dorothy Gibney, Betty Gibney, Donald Budesheim, Florence George, Jerry Greentree, Lloyd Massee.

Merle Horton was a new Grade nine student.

Grade one class in September 1951, with teacher Miss Dolores Probst, consisted of Paddy Budesheim, Sharon George, and Lorraine Greentree.

In September 1952, 25 pupils were registered with Miss Pearl Lester. The new faces belonged to Tom and David Whyte, Delilla Luckey, and Winnifred Buckley in Grade one, Wayne Buckley in Grade two, and Walter Buckley in Grade six.

Miss Ruby Yates was assigned to Lucky Tree School on May 1, 1953 and remained until the end of 1954. Her first graders in September 1953 were Norman, Dorothy and Francis Beaulieu, John George, Carley Luckey and Robert Walters.

Cheryl Bain and Barbara Whyte began school in September 1954. The Dycks, Helena, Margaret and Abe were pupils.

In 1955 Mr. T.W. Collinge came to teach, and his boys, James and Bert, were in the Grade one class. Lawrence Beaulieu, Edna Byrnes, John Luckey, and Carol Walters were also in the first grade. Sharon and Laurelle Byrnes were two more newcomers.

The pupils of the district were "enjoying" a new experience in September 1956 when they began to ride the buses to Grande Prairie. Mr. Collinge remained in the teacherage for a year or more having constructed an addition and installed electricity with the County's permission and the understanding that he would be allowed to move the addition at any time in the future.

Lucky Tree School, in 1947, was a 16' x 24' structure with a 4.5' x 14' porch. It was heated by a 36" coal-burning heater. An April 29, 1949 school inspection report noted that the "school was too small" and in July arrangements were being made to provide additional space. This same report states that at that time there was no flag pole provided and the playgrounds had no swings or see-saws.



Lucky Tree School (1948-49).
Back row: L. to R. Verna Luckey, Phillip Latos, Gwen Walters, Yvonne Pivert, Florence Luckey, Jack Greentree, Jerry Greentree.
Next row: Erna Fehr, Willy Gibney, Betty Gibney, Dorothy Luckey, Dorothy Gibney, Douglas Greentree.
Front row: Lloyd Massee, Margaret Stephen, Faye Cumber, Florence George, Donald Budesheim.

Mr. Collinge disposed of his interest in the teacherage to Grace Children's Home of Dimsdale (the balance was donated by the County). The school, barn and toilets were sold to the Home for a small sum, with the stipulation that the site must be cleaned of all debris.

Social activities over the years consisted of Hallowe'en parties, Christmas concerts, handicraft sales, etc. to make money for "Santa's gifts". School meetings were held in the school and bridal showers were given for local girls.



Miss Edith Olstad, teacher at Lucky Tree, September 1949 to June 1950.

History of "Spring Creek" Coal Mine

by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Tissington

The Globe Coal Mine (better known as Spring Creek Coal Mine) was located on Al Havelena's land, six miles west and four miles south of Grande Prairie.

Tom Russell was first to hold the coal lease. He had built himself a shack on the road allowance of a dead-end road, and he lived there until his death.

Late one night, when the temperature outside was in the 40 degrees below zero range, Frank Gibney and Bernard Tissington had been working on the water pump and seeing no smoke coming from "old Tom's" chimney went to investigate. They entered and searched two rooms, but were unable to open the door of his bedroom. Upon shining a miner's light in through the window they could see him lying on the floor in front of the door with only a coat over him. Since this area had no telephones at that time, they had to harness and hook up a team of horses in order to drive to town to notify the police.

Going back in our story to 1931, the Aseltine brothers, Bill, Chet and Had sub-leased from Tom Russell and operated the mine for a few years. Had did the cooking while the other two dug coal. Maurice O'Reilly and Ole Augustine also worked with them. In 1932 Bill Aseltine

and Viola Gabler, whose family had taken homestead land in the Grovedale area, were married and the miners had a new cook. Vi also prepared meals for many of the coal haulers.

The Mitchell brothers, Bill and Tom, and their two uncles mined coal in the Spring Creek area for a short time.

Shuttacker, Budesheim and Bloom next had the coal lease north of Russell's mine. In 1933, Gus Meyers, who had second class papers, opened this mine. He later sold his interest to Fred Budesheim.

The new partners put down a slope, approximately 260 feet, and an 86 foot air shaft and brought in from Drumheller such equipment as coal cars, steel rails, hoists and blower for air, etc. They operated this mine until 1935 when water forced them to close down.



Frank Gibney and Abe Graham with the horse power used to haul the coal cars up the slope to the tipple.



Tipple at Spring Creek Mine.



End of Shift, at forge to sharpen picks. L. to R. Frank Gibney, Maurice O'Reilly, Elmer Valin, Bill Sinclair.

The mine equipment was then sold to Wes Stephen who re-opened the Tom Russell lease. Here it was not necessary to put down a slope as it went in on the level on the Spring Creek banks. They built a tipple on top of the bank and hoisted the coal up. Frank Gibney got his papers and was pit boss for Wes Stephen. Each miner who worked at the coal face also had to have a miner's card.

During the "hungry thirties" the mines created considerable employment for the surrounding districts and the Grande Prairie merchants were pleased to see the miners come to town.

Ernie Watt of Flying Shot obtained the mine from Wes Stephen and operated it until 1938 at which time he sold it to Gerard and Bernard Tissington who operated it as it was for that winter. Gerard hauled coal and Bernard worked at the mine.



Bernard Tissington coming out of the mine with a car of coal.

During the summer of 1939 Jim Pollock and Bernard dug an air shaft which was five feet square and 86 feet deep. This was all done by hand. They ran into sand at a depth of 20 feet and continued on through 40 feet of gumbo which had to be cribbed every foot of the way. Next they blasted through 25 feet of sandstone. This shaft was used for air and as an escape route. The pump used for pumping water out of the mine was also located there. On cold days you would see the steam going 40 to 50 feet into the air like smoke from a chimney.

The coal was now being screened and so was available for many purposes. Schools, hospital, restaurants and farmers used lump coal. Anderson's big van from Dawson Creek would come for stoker coal. Farmers from Bear Lake and other areas hauled the coal slack for their pigs.

The mine had become very active by now and had a contract to supply coal to the Grande Prairie army barracks. These deliveries must be made on time whether rain or shine.

In the summer Jim Pollock would mine two tons of coal each day. Then he and Bernard would push it out and load it on a wagon. Jim would go back in the mine to mine for the next day while Bernard would haul the load of coal to town.

These trips were made late in the day when the driver was tired. He would tie up the lines and try to get some sleep. The horses were left to go by themselves and sometimes took the wrong road. One time on the way home they turned in to Gerard's place and ran over a row



Jim Pollock riding a coal car up the slope.

of spruce trees which Gerard and Helen had newly planted. So that "wink" wasn't too popular. No doubt many other former coal haulers could tell equally humorous stories. Sometimes the horses would decide that the blizzard conditions and the long road home were too difficult and would pull in and stop in a friendly-appearing farmyard!

During the wet fall of 1941 when Ewart Ellis of Grande Prairie was hauling with the big truck to the barracks, the gumbo on the six mile road rolled off his wheels in big piles.

Some of the other haulers were Gerard Tissington, Bud Luckey, Seath Sutherland, Albert Partlow, Jack Murray and Jim Tissington. Some of the other miners and workers were Archie Henderson, Fred Budesheim, Bill Sinclair, Maurice O'Reilly, Alex Thompson, Jock Thompson, Jim Dunbar, Bill Griffiths, Ken Tissington, Norman Erskine, Wally Castille, Charlie Castille, Lloyd Finch, Jack Laverick, Tom Eskdale. There were numerous others.

The mine created a fair-sized payroll for those years. Stella Tissington did the payroll and books. She also cooked for the miners; bread was baked every day except Sunday. Some of her helpers were Maisie Sinclair (Hoyme), Mary Cameron (Finch), Olive Thompson and Camilla Castille. There was hard work to be done, but everyone also had lots of fun.

When the Unemployment Insurance inspector first came, he complimented Stella on the first set of books he found done correctly.

The chief inspector of mines came in from Edmonton to inspect the mine. "Where's your dad?" he asked Bernard Tissington.

"On the farm."

His next question was, "Who's running the mine?"



6-ton load of coal on its way to Grande Prairie.

"I am," replied Bernard.

The inspector shook his head and said, "You look pretty young (Bernard was 22) to operate a mine like this."

This mine had to be inspected at least once a year. In 1942 we sold the mine as it was difficult to obtain miners and workers. There was a shortage as many of them were going into the army.

Coal mining was carried on for a few more years in this area. Cumbers and Baldwins were operating for a time.



Bringing out a car of coal.

The Aseltine Family

by Margaret Aseltine

Had Aseltine came from Saskatchewan in the early thirties. He lived off and on in the Dimsdale district till 1951, when we moved to the coast.

I was born in Clairmont in my grandparents farm house. We moved to the Dimsdale district in 1927. I started school at Dimsdale. We had five and a half miles to go when we first started, Edna, Pauline and I. It was a long way in the winter time. We moved closer to the Flying Shot School in '28 (I think) so went there. After that it was only three and a half miles. Bill and I rode to school one winter day when it was 55 below. We had no thermometer, and discovered there was no school that day. We often stopped at Ross' on the way home to get warm at their heater, then go the rest of the way. We always rode bare back on old Dan, as it was warmer.

Had and I farmed the home place after we were married in 1943. Mom moved to the coast with the younger kids, Freda, Anne, John and George.

We have many fond memories of that district - the dances till sun up, the parties that everyone took a turn at, concerts, picnics if it didn't rain. We remember Mr. and Mrs. Leslie's store and meeting place, also riding horseback to the show in 30 below weather and thinking nothing of it.

Dean, Pat, Daryll, Jim & Judy were born there. We moved to the coast in 1951. After we had been hailed out, froze out, dried out, we figured there must be a better way to make a living. Had died in 1956 in Kelowna.

The Edwin Davidson Brown Family

by Mrs. Gladys Stephen

Edwin Davidson Brown was born in Ontario; Mary Alice, his wife, was born in North Dakota. When their baby daughter, Ruth, arrived they were living in Oregon. I, Gladys, was also born in Oregon and became their adopted daughter when I was four years old.

Our father had a serious asthmatic condition. He had found that he felt better at altitudes that were higher than where we lived in Oregon.

Edwin Brown had heard stories of the Peace River country and believed that the higher altitudes there would bring him relief. In 1917 he made a trip to the Grande Prairie area. He liked this new country so much that he bought a farm from a man named Watson who had homesteaded south-west of the town.

Upon his return, he sold his Oregon business and property. A freight car was loaded with furniture, two Jersey cows, two Percheron horses and one Airedale dog. As I was then only 12 years of age, it is difficult to remember, but I think it took about a month to make the trip.

The railroad had been extended from Edmonton to Grande Prairie in 1916 and this part of the journey was one week long. We arrived in March of 1918 at which time the road was very bad.

Edwin Brown regained his health and farmed his land for many years. My sister had by now changed her name to Ruth Ogilvie Livingston. In 1923 George Edgar Stephen and I, Gladys May Brown, were married by Dr. Forbes, the Presbyterian minister. We had three children, Mary Elizabeth, George Edwin and Margaret Ruth.

I attended the Wapiti School until my marriage. Later, our two older children were pupils at the same school. Margaret went to Lucky Tree School and Grande Prairie High School. We attended services at the Presbyterian Church.

Edwin Brown died in 1943 and his widow died in 1946. George Stephen passed away October 31, 1971.

John and Flora H. George

by Mrs. Edith Luckey

John and Flora H. George, their three sons, John, Herbert and William and I, their daughter, Edith heard about the Peace River Country from my uncle Peter George and my grandparents who had come from Southern Alberta to Grande Prairie and bought up a considerable amount of land. They wanted my dad to come up and farm some of it. It didn't take much persuasion for Dad to decide to leave the dust bowl in southern Alberta.

So in November, 1920, we came to Grande Prairie by train. The passenger train took a few days and the freight cars took two weeks to get here. Mother and we younger children stayed with my grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Peter George, in Grande Prairie. In the meantime, my uncle located a house for us down by Bear Creek. We were allowed to build a temporary barn to shelter the livestock for the winter.

I attended school at Montrose School where Mr. Elsworth Foy was principal. My brother Herbert attended school in another building. We went to church and Sunday school in the little log Forbes Presbyterian Church where Rev. Alexander Forbes was the minister.

In the spring of 1921 Dad rented four quarters of land from my uncle. This land was east and south of Dimsdale



William George with parents, Flora and John George.

(W½ 1-71-7-W6 and S½ 2-71-7-W6). We moved out to make our home in the new two-storey frame house situated in the south-west corner of SW 1-71-7-W6. My uncle Peter George and my grandparents then built a smaller house on the same quarter of land a short distance to the north-east of ours, and moved out from Grande Prairie.

We farmed with horses, travelled by team and wagon, by horse and buggy or on foot. The land was cleared with axes, grub hoes and root picks, stumps pulled with horses, and the roots were picked by hand. The breaking was done with horses and then there were more roots to be picked! The grain was cut with a binder, stooked by hand and threshed with a threshing machine. Seed grain was cleaned with a hand-turned fanning mill.

We thought the Peace River Country was beautiful with its many trees, bushes and flowers. The saskatoons, blueberries and other wild fruits grew in good supply. The prairie chickens and partridges were plentiful and got quite tame and ate along with our chickens. The rabbits were very numerous and a real nuisance as they ate into the bottom of the feed stacks. Our closest neighbors were the Paul Larson family.

My brothers, Herbert and William, and I walked to Flying Shot School. Other activities at the school were church services, Sunday school, picnics, school fairs, dances and box socials, Christmas concerts, as well as other social events. We attended church services at the Spring Creek Church in the Dimsdale area. A church site had been acquired there by Rev. Forbes. Prier and Armstrong were the ministers. W.I. meetings were held there and also at Flying Shot school.

My older brother, John H. George, homesteaded in the Millarston district where he spent a number of winters in his little log cabin. Some years later he sold his homestead and went to Vancouver where he worked in the shipyards. He died of cancer in 1949. He had one son, John Morrison George.



John H. George's homestead cabin.

The Allan Grant Family

by Allan Grant

Our oldest son, Morley, was born in southern Alberta, the twins, George and John, and daughter Cathy after we moved north.

Pat and I first heard about the Peace Country from her brother, Bill McIntosh, who farmed and ran a dairy just north of Wembley. We decided to make the move, since land was cheaper in "the Peace" than it was down in the High River area.

We started our move in November, 1952 at Aldersyde, 15 miles from Blackie. We loaded one freight car with our personal effects, one with 25 head of cattle and one flat car with two John Deere tractors and an eight-foot Massey combine.

Pat and two-year old Morley made the trip with her brother, Bill, in a pickup truck.

I spent the first night sleeping in the hay in one of the cars. By morning the train had reached Edmonton. At the Swift's buying station in Edmonton I unloaded the cattle and watered them, milked the four milk cows and fed the four "pail bunters".

McLennan was the next stop where I unloaded the cattle. It was one o'clock in the morning. Watering the cattle here took about three hours. I had only two small pails and had to pack water about one-quarter of a mile from the round-house to those 25 head of thirsty cattle.

After watering them, I re-loaded the cattle and waited for the train crew to finish switching cars. One of the crew came to inform me that I had forgotten to load one of my cows. This puzzled me, and I was about to check when the crew started to laugh. Apparently there was an old fellow from McLennan who ran his cow at large in the town and the train crew thought that this was a chance to get rid of her!

November 9, 1952 we finally arrived in Wembley. It had been four days since we had left Aldersyde. The unloading platform was alive with stories; a move like this had not been made for quite a spell.

That first winter was spent at the Duncan place, north of Wembley, across the road from Stan Barley.

We had purchased a half-section of land just west of Dimsdale, but there were no buildings on the land except for four granaries. So during that first winter Stan helped build a barn and a chicken house. We lived in the chicken house during our first summer at Dimsdale. Later we built a 24' x 24' house that we lived in until 1967.

In 1967 we sold and moved south to the Greentree place on Spring Creek where we are still farming.

"Louie" Hawkes was a great help to us when we first came to Dimsdale. At one point when he bawled me out about something, his daughter, Ethel, said, "He's treating you the same as the rest of us kids!"

The County of Grande Prairie opened Harry Balfour School in 1956. This was the year that Morley started school.

I spent three winters in the bush working for George Stephen in his sawmill. Since I had never before seen a mill, this was quite a different experience. The first winter I went out by myself, but the following two winters Pat and the kids came with me. Morley had to take parts of grades one and two out in the bush taught by Pat.

I drove the school bus in the Dimsdale area from 1958 to 1969 and from 1974 to 1980. From 1969 to 1974 I drove a seed truck for the Alberta Wheat Pool. This was a great chance to meet people from Manning to Fort St. John.

Pat taught at the Wapiti School from December, 1954 to June, 1955. She returned to teaching in 1960 when our youngest, Cathy, started school. She taught at the Peace School of Hope for six years, five of these as principal. The 1967-'68 school year was spent teaching at Grovedale School. Since 1968 she has been teaching elementary grades at the Harry Balfour School.

While I was involved with the Dairy 4-H Club for several years, Pat led the Dimsdale 4-H Sewing Club during the early 1960's.



Allan Grant as he appeared in concert at Dimsdale - 1955.



Pat grant (make-up artist) and Elwood Rooney preparing for concert at Dimsdale - 1955.



Morley, John, George and Cathy Grant on "Toro".

Our oldest boy, Morley, who graduated from Fairview College in 1971, was drowned in the Peace River at Dunvegan in 1972 on the eve of his wedding day. John finished high school and went on to Horticultural College at Niagara Falls. While in Ontario he met, wooed and married Debbie Watson of St. Catherines in August 1974. He now works at the Beaverlodge Nursery and has a farm west of Beaverlodge. John and Deb have two sons, Jonathon and Thomas. George graduated with honors in Animal Health from Fairview College in 1974. In September, 1979 he married Carol Arlint of Grovedale and works for Proctor and Gamble in the sawmill. He has a farm south-west of Grovedale to which they plan to move in 1980. Cathy is an animal health technician at Prairie Meadows Veterinary Clinic in Grande Prairie, having graduated in Animal Health Technology from the Fairview College in 1977.

I moved five hundred miles, and I do not think that I could have settled in a better community. It seemed that everybody had come in "from the outside"--as the saying goes.

The Richard Greentree Family

by Richard Greentree

I was born in Calgary, Alberta in March of 1910, one of ten, 3 girls and 7 boys. My father came out from England in the early 90's. My mother was raised in Ancaster, Ontario. Her mother's name was Louise Robarts.

Moving to the Prairies with the late P. Burns and big time rancher, George Lane, my father ended up in the valley where Drumheller now stands. He ran 1000 head of cattle and lots of horses, until the finding of a large seam of coal prompted the big operators to come in.

The town eventually took over the ranch. There is a large subdivision and shopping centre there now, named after my father. Wish he could have seen it to realize that his work was not all in vain. He squatted on the land in 1901, when it was part of the Northwest Territories, and filed and proved up in 1905, when it became a province.

After the passing of my mother in 1925, my father (died in 1956) decided in 1927 that he and Harry and I, should trek off to the wonderful Peace River Country. It took 14 days from Edmonton in a box car loaded with 4 horses and some settlers effects to arrive in Grande Prairie. We finally landed at the stock yards in Dimsdale on or about the first of August, 1927. Two of the horses got out at night and wandered a mile or so south where Mr. Ted Lewis (on Dillon farm) caught and tied them up. We bought our one and only milk cow from him after that. We finally settled down on the old Lucy place as it was called then. Mr. and Mrs. Young farm it now. Jack Stephenson was there before Mr. Young.

In 1929, I went to work for Alex Craig who lived just north of us, and was there nearly a year. Then in 1930, I walked from Dimsdale up to Lake Saskatoon and got a job with William Grant, working there for about six months at $40 a month. Next winter, I went into the bush to work for George Stephen in a little sawmill powered by a 1926 John Deere tractor. While working there, I met his father, G.M. Stephen and eventually his daughter, Iola, whom I married after a stormy courtship. But it was worth it. We got married in the little white church in Clairmont on March 21, 1931.

My wife, Iola, was born in Lajord, Saskatchewan where her dad and mother ran a small post office and butcher shop, until they decided to move to Fort Saskatchewan in 1915. From there, in 1917, they came to Grande Prairie to work in the U.G.G. elevator, where he worked until about 1921, when he took over the job of running Grande Prairie's first Co-op store in a building situated on the spot where the York Hotel now stands.

Iola went to the new Montrose School, built in 1917. She had all her schooling in Grande Prairie and has had quite a few grandchildren learn their ABC's in the same building. Iola, as a young girl of 17, moved out to the farm (where Ed McIntosh is now), to take up the cooking duties for her father, as her mother had passed on in 1925. She finally mastered the art of cooking and to date, she is getting better all the time. It was a tough battle in the hungry thirties, but we all learned something and learned to appreciate what we had and didn't have. It was tough, but it was worth it, as I found I was a real lucky guy who had a wonderful wife, who never gave up. We raised 7 children, 2 girls and 5 boys, who all had their jobs to do and they did them real well, considering no pay, but a full belly, through good times and bad ones.



Dick Greentree family.
Back row: (L. to R.) Jim, David, Doug, Jack, Jerry.
Front row: (L. to R.) Louise, Iola, Dick and Lorraine.

Some of them walked 5 miles (approximately) to Millarston school when I was using the horses on the land. In the winter I fixed up a closed in sleigh box with a little heater in it that burnt wood. Kept them quite cosy, and we used to have some real cold weather those days.

All the kids went to Lucky Tree School, named after William Luckey and me. Hence the Lucky Tree. Then it closed down because teachers were hard to find, and the kids went by bus to the Harry Balfour School in Grande Prairie.

Francis Linden (Card) worked for Mrs. E.D. Brown for a number of years. While working there she and Iola got to be good friends, as they still are today. Francis eventually married Tony Linden and raised 3 children.

In the fall of 1929, Harry and I crossed the Wapiti River, down by Thomson's ranch road and squatted on land in Grovedale. My quarter was about 2 miles west and ½ mile north of the store. No store here then. When we needed things we walked to town and crossed the river the best way we could find.

I stayed there until 1934, and then turned it over to Harry, as I had two children to go to school soon, and no school there. So I moved over to the Wapiti Coal Mines under the supervision of Nick Schneider and William Loskill, now deceased, at the large wage of $2.65 per day and board ourselves. It was hard work, but good for me. I also worked in the Spring Creek Coal mines for Bernard Tissington and Fern and Smoky Cumber and others at $5.00 per day, coming up.

Then, in 1942, I went to Drumheller with another fellow and we worked in mines near East Coulee. By this time, I had just about enough, but stayed on at it as it was the only thing to do in winter and I still had to feed and clothe a family.

Things were sure a lot different then and we worked hard, but had lots of fun of our own making. Lots of dances and picnics and such. When we moved up here to the Peace River Country, my younger brother, Reg, was going to school in Hardisty, Alberta, while staying with his sister, Rita Bowen. In September, 1928 he came up here, attending school in Wembley, where he finished his grades. He then went to Sudbury, Ontario and worked in the mines there until 1940, when he married, just before going into the Army and overseas. He was killed in Belgium in 1945.

In 1944, Mr. Stephen decided to quit farming, so Iola and I took over the farm W½ 35-70-7 W6, and stayed there until 1963, when for health reasons, I had to get out of it. Iola had had enough of the uncertain conditions pertaining to the farming operation. Cheap everything, except what you had to buy.

All of our children were born in Grande Prairie, except the two oldest and David. David was born at home and Louise at the Ernie Cowell home. Jim was born in Dimsdale under the watchful eye of Mrs. A. Ramsfield, wife of the storekeeper at Dimsdale. They had got out of the store business in 1930 and were just living in Dimsdale to catch their breath until they moved back to Wanham, where they originally came from.

We used to hunt a lot along the banks of the River, lots of deer and moose. Used to haul firewood from across the river and it was quite a pull up that hill by Spring Creek. Ralph and George Johnson and I made that road in 1930. There was lots of lumber hauled up out of there on that road. We used to have a great swimming hole, in the Wapiti, down at the back water. Was it ever good. Quite a few used to go there almost every Sunday with teams and wagons and such and have real picnics. Wish I could still go, as the fishing sometimes was super. Lots of big jacks and trout and wild fruit galore.

Now all our children are away, just have three around Grande Prairie, two girls work at Swanhaven and one in the General Hospital and David works for the County. Doug is in Slave Lake in a big grocery store. Jack and Jerry are in B.C., Jim is still in the Army (has been for 25 years), stationed in Winnipeg and supposed to retire this year.

Well, I must get to work and make a few more articles of art from wood scraps and I also spend some time hooking rugs. I also try to walk about 40 blocks a day, down to the Co-op twice for coffee and to rehash the old days.



4 Generations: Mr. Gavin Stephen, Iola Greentree, Louise Hanham with sons, Rick and Rob.

William Ervin (Bud) and Edith Luckey

by Mrs. Edith Luckey

In 1931 William Ervin (Bud) Luckey bought SE 2-71-7-W6 from my uncle Peter George. After clearing up a building site down by Spring Creek he built a house and barn. In 1932, Bud and I, Edith George, were married and set up housekeeping in our one-roomed house by Spring Creek. We farmed with horses. Grain was still cut with a binder, stooked and threshed. Later we bought SW 2-71-7-W6 from my uncle's estate and also purchased NW 2-71-7-W6. By this time we were farming with a tractor and a combine.

We bought a larger house but still had no indoor plumbing or electricity. Heating and cooking were done with wood and coal stoves. Bud hauled coal from Spring Creek mine to Grande Prairie with four horses and sleigh for several winters.

We made pillow-cases, tea towels, aprons and sheets from 100 lb. flour bags. Grain sacks made good, long-wearing hand towels and laundered up beautifully with our home-made laundry soap.

As our family increased some additions to our house became necessary to accommodate our family of nine,



Bud and Edith Luckey and family July 1976.

seven daughters (Phyllis, Verna, Dorothy, Florence, Delilla, Carley and Annette) and two sons (William and John). The four older girls rode horseback or drove to Flying Shot School. Later they all went to Luckey Tree School that was located on our SE 2-71-7-W6 in the south-east corner next to the correction line and named after the two largest families attending (the Greentrees and the Luckeys). The younger children were later taken by bus to the Harry Balfour School in Grande Prairie.

We attended the Sunday school at the Dimsdale Hall and later at the Grace Children's Home with Roy Housworth as Superintendent. We are now (1980) retired and living in Grande Prairie where we attend the Church of Christ.

Our daughters and sons are now living in various parts of Canada as follows: Phyllis (Mrs. C.M. Hommy), Prince George, B.C., Verna (Mrs. Leonard Kozlowski), Dawson Creek, B.C., Dorothy (Mrs. Carl Lester), Grande Prairie, Alberta, Florence (Mrs. Florence Lester), Grande Prairie, Alberta, William Luckey, Dimsdale, Alberta, Delilla (Mrs. Patrick Stinn), Calgary, Alberta, Carley (Mrs. Terry Lidgett), Red Deer, Alberta, John Luckey, Toronto, Ontario, and Annette (Mrs. Kenneth Mulligan), Sunset House, Alberta.

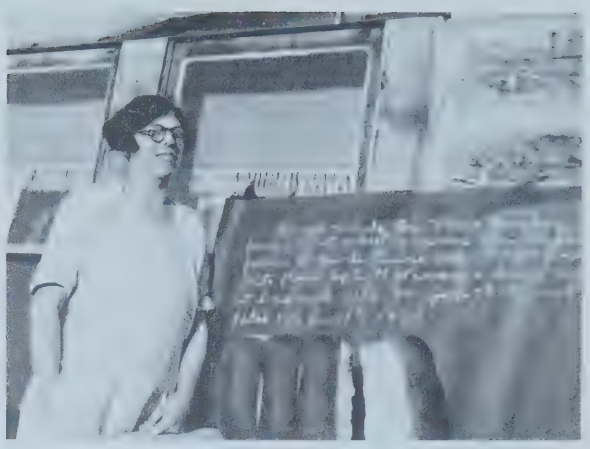


"Bud" Luckey with binder and horses.

William Ervin and Helen Anna Luckey

by Mrs. Edith Luckey

In 1923 William Ervin and Helen Anna Luckey and son, William Ervin, Jr., purchased the Owen's half section, the south half of Section 13 east of Dimsdale, and moved from Rio Grande where they had arrived from North Dakota in 1921. They had heard about the Peace River Country from an old friend and decided that it would be a good place for farming. They used horses and mules for their farming operations. They bought a threshing outfit and went out threshing on neighbors' farms as well.



Mrs. Helen Luckey and bread.

In 1935 they built a new, large modern house. They continued farming until 1938 when Mr. Luckey passed away. Their closest neighbors had been Mr. and Mrs. Tom Waterman. They had attended church services at Spring Creek Church.



W. E. Luckey's (Sr.) horses and binder.



W. E. Luckey's (Sr.) old and new houses, 1936.

The George Edgar Stephen Family

by Mrs. Mary Kilgour

I, Mary Elizabeth Stephen Kilgour, my brother George Edwin (Bud) Stephen, and my sister, Margaret Ruth Stephen Walker were born and raised in the Dimsdale district, children of Gladys May Brown and George Edgar Stephen.

Dad was born near Miama, Manitoba. He lived in many places, among them Lajord, Saskatchewan, and St. Albert, Alberta and Grande Prairie before settling in the Dimsdale district. This was in 1918, during the first years that trains were running into the Peace River Country.

My grandfather, Gavin Stephen, who had previously been a grain buyer, lived on SW 34-70-7-W6. He and my father now farmed together.

When Mother and Dad were married in 1923, they each filed on a homestead. We lived on this land until I was about six years old and my brother was four to five years of age. We then moved and my brother was four to five years of age. We then moved to SW 3-71-7-W6, the farm owned by Mother's parents. Dad farmed this land until he sold it in 1961.

Dad did many things besides growing grain. In the thirties we milked cows for a living. Dad owned a threshing machine, one of the few in the district. He did custom threshing and would be away for weeks at a time in the fall. He and his father ran a small sawmill in the off season. They sawed rough lumber for granaries, sheds, barns, etc. During the summer of 1944, a bad forest fire where the mill was located, destroyed all the best timber near the Wapiti. After this Dad expanded the mill and operated a successful business until about 1965.

One other thing that I remember him doing was hauling coal in the wintertime from the mines located on the banks of the Wapiti River. These mines employed many men and also gave the local farmers a chance to earn some extra money by hauling coal to town to sell.

Mother would drive to Grande Prairie to sell butter and eggs. I can remember making the trip with her in the winter with the team and cutter and with the old car in the summer.

Bud and I were educated at the Wapiti School located one and one-half miles west of Dimsdale. I even took my grade nine there before going to high school in Grande Prairie.

Margaret took some of her early schooling by correspondence, while the family spent the winters away back in the bush at the lumber mill. She later attended Lucky Tree school east of where we lived.



Stephen's Sawmills Softball Team - 1948 Winners of the Challenge Cup.
Top: Wid Rintoul, Ken Johnston, Bill Hawkes, Bob Seymour, ? ?.
Bottom: George Rintoul, Art Seymour, Walter MacAlister, George Bain, ? ?.



Office and Commissary at Big Mountain camp 1952 - 53.

The Glyn Walters Family

Glyn (Glyndwr) Walters was born March 2, 1896 in Cardiff, Wales. As a boy he enjoyed fishing and still did in his twilight years. He moved to Canada in 1912 to Three Hills, then to the Sexsmith area in 1914. He went back to Three Hills and to Edmonton and worked as a carpenter. He also spent a year in the army but never went overseas as the war ended before he was transferred. In 1924 he married Frances Quilley of Edmonton. They had three children, Alf now in Seattle, Washington, Bill in Calgary and daughter Mrs. Jack (Gwen) Alstad of Wembley.

Then Glyn, with his family, moved back to Sexsmith in 1937, during the depression, where he farmed a quarter on the Emerson trail, by the Emerson trail cemetery. He moved to the Flying Shot area in 1940 and later to Dimsdale where he continued farming, until he took up building contracting in the fast growing city of Grande Prairie in 1949.

While in Flying Shot and Dimsdale, many happy days were spent with neighbors and friends. There was blueberry picking time, when neighbors would hitch up their teams to wagons and the whole family, with pails and picnic lunches would invade the woods and come home weary but with many berries to enjoy through the long winter months. The school picnics with all the home-made ice-cream and ball games and races, with a little money for prizes were fun, also the box socials and dances which we attended by horses and wagon or sleds. I never heard of anyone being picked up for impaired driving in those days. To ride to Grande Prairie on horseback to see a movie (round trip 20 miles) was another activity for some, especially the younger ones.

One of the outstanding events I remember is when we had to move to Dimsdale area from Flying Shot, in the dead of winter, the temperature was around -40 F to -50 F. The neighbors put us up in their homes and helped haul logs and built a log house in a matter of weeks, and a warm one at that. Some of the neighbors were Albert Partlow, Ted Rintoul and Jim Tissington, Jr.

In the year 1972 Glyn and his wife Frances returned to Edmonton and took up residence in Meadowcroft Apartment. There they celebrated their Golden Wedding with all the family present. At the time there were 16 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

March 23, 1975 was a sad day for the Walters as Glyn passed away at the age of 79. He was laid to rest in the Evergreen Memorial Gardens in Edmonton.

Frances is still living at Meadowcroft Apartment and takes part in many of the activities that are provided for the senior citizens in this Apartment.

Glyn's son Alf attended school at Flying Shot, then spent some time in the army, but never went overseas. He married Jean Eskdale of Flying Shot. Alf farmed for some time in the Dimsdale area. They had three children; Bob of Grovedale, who married Jackie and they have two children; Carol, Mrs. Harold Fiveland of Flying Shot, who has one child; and Lane and wife, Dianne, of Grande Prairie.

Alf then went into building construction and moved to Grande Prairie. Jean passed away in 1975. He remarried and moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico and now lives in Seattle, Washington.

Bill Walters also attended school in Flying Shot and Grande Prairie, then went into construction. He married Theresa Murray of Woking. They have nine children. Bill later moved to Edmonton and is now in Calgary. They have seven grandchildren.

Gwen (Mrs. Jack Alstad of Wembley) attended school in Flying Shot, Lucky Tree and Grande Prairie. They have four children and two grandchildren and are in the farming business.

Lucky Tree District

No history of the Lucky Tree district would be complete without mention of the following:

The Fred Budesheims have lived for many years on SW 1-71-7-W6. Mrs. Budesheim is the former Emma Zahn whose parents lived in the Flying Shot district.

The SE 1-71-7-W6 was homesteaded in 1913 by the Paul Larson family.

Although the children of the W.V. Mitchell family attended the Millarston School through their early years, the land on which they lived, SE 33-70-7-W6, became part of Lucky Tree School District when it was formed in 1947.

John Latos now farms SE 35-70-7-W6. This land was occupied for a time by Al Havelenas.

Preparing The Land



George plowing at Alex Craigs in 1942.



Wes Stokke ploughing with 14 horses.



W.C. and Ray Dillon breaking sod in 1912.



Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Conley broadcasting grain on the homestead.



Gordon McCullough and Frank Stoll plowing first furrow for new home, 1942.



Eric Berg doing some breaking in 1934.



Hugh Thompson driving eight miles.



Plowing on Miller farm. Pete McNeil, Jack Miller on tractor.

Chapter 9: Millarston



Millarston School District No. 4436

by Mrs. Yvonne MacAlister and Mrs. Eileen Wald

In February 1929 Mrs. Agnes Millar MacAlister wrote her first letter to the educational authorities and by March a petition was submitted by Duncan Bain, Agnes MacAlister and J.B. Laplace regarding the formation of a school district in Township 70, Ranges 7 and 8, west of the Sixth Meridian.

The trustees of the new Millarston School District No. 4436 held their first meeting November 9, 1929. A well-attended meeting of the ratepayers on March 28, 1930 resolved that the school-site should be forty rods west of the south-east corner of Section 29, in Township 70, Range 7, West of the Sixth Meridian. This resolution was subsequently approved by order of the Minister of Education.

A letter from the Building Supervisor of the Dept. of Education stated that plans and specifications for a log school building were given approval April 8, 1930.

Mrs. MacAlister, on August 20, 1930 advised School Inspector Balfour that "The Schoolhouse is being built now by Messrs Mercer and MacLean of Wembley. We have signed an agreement with Mr. E.J. Rennick of Regina in which he agrees to teach for the salary of one thousand dollars per year with an additional one hundred on June 30th, 1931, if the Board deem it advisable. He is here now, with Mrs. Rennick and family, building a little cottage on the school-site, which will eventually become the property of the District.

Kind regards from Mr. Laplace and Mr. Watts (the other two school trustees).

Several area men assisted with the building of the school. Among them were Seath Sutherland who supplied the rocks for the foundation. The logs were hauled from across the Wapiti River by Iain MacAlister. Paul and Bill Schmidt took great pride in erecting them to produce a building that was well-constructed and pleasing to the eye.

Mr. Rennick taught Millarston School until the end of June 1932. Children of school age in September 1930 were Helen, Duncan and George Bain, Lillian Beaulieu, Hugh and Margaret Campbell, Peggy, Walter and Don



Millarston School.



Millarston School children, late 30's.

MacAlister, Janet Whyte, Hilda Hosker, Albert and Louis Laplace, May, George and Jean Cahoon and Mary Brumpton. The three Rennick children, Madge, and twins, Earl and Merle, attended school, too.

The Rennicks were a musical family and during their stay a Cantata was prepared for presentation at Christmas-time featuring the pupils and themselves. The players also travelled to Wembley and that performance realized a tidy sum which was to be used to purchase needed library books and school equipment.

In September 1932 Miss Margaret Lewis was engaged as teacher. She is remembered for coaching her pupils to winning entries in the Grande Prairie Musical Festival and the Strathcona Trust trophy (a shield presented for Physical Education). Newcomers in the school were Florence George, Peggy Gerow came from South Wapiti and stayed with Miss Lewis in the teacherage. The Murrays, Eileen, Jean and Vivian had transferred from Wapiti School and Colleen McArthur also attended for part of one year.



Ace of Diamonds Dance, Grande Prairie Musical Festival, 1934 L. to R. Peggy MacAlister, Helen Bain, Peggy Gerow, Eileen Murray, Florence George, May Cahoon, Jean Cahoon, Colleen McArthur, Margaret Campbell, Jean Murray, Mary Brumpton, Vivian Murray.

During these years John and Agnes Whyte, Tom Cahoon and Betty Brumpton went to Millarston School. It is believed that the Ryans of South Wapiti had one (or both) of their girls, Lois and Betty, attending during the first years that the school was in operation.

Miss Jessie Erskine came to teach Millarston in September 1934. Her pupils remember such enjoyable activities as a late June camping week-end in the vicinity of the Pipestone Creek ferry.

Apologies to any former pupils who have not been mentioned in the years 1930 to June 1937. While the Sask family were living on the Myers quarter some of them were in classes at Millarston School.

September 1937 brought Mr. C.W. (Bill) Sparling as teacher and this is the first year for which it is possible to obtain copies of school register sheets for School District No. 4436. Pupils who attended that year were Walter and Don MacAlister, Vivian and Joyce Murray, George Bain, George, Jean and Tom Cahoon, John, Max, Shirley and Jim Sutherland, Bob, Bill and Gordon Mitchell, Eddie Johnston, John and Agnes Whyte, Ralph Hosker, Nellie and Shirley Watson, Nancy Wood, and Doreen and Vernon Hawkes.

Mr. D.F. (Don) Caldwell began teaching in September 1938. Newcomers during the 1938-39 and 1939-40 terms were George, Tom and Dan Sinclair, Ethel Hawkes, Clifford Campbell, Roy Robertson, Eric Bisgrove, Jim and Louise Greentree, Alvin Hosker, Ken, Harold, Marvin and Dorothy Johnston and Joan Sutherland.

Jack Murray and Christina Watson began school in September 1940 with a new teacher, Mr. J.B. (Jack) Fisher.

When the next teacher, Mr. Claude E. Cavett, arrived for the 1941 fall term the attendance was 32. The Cavett twins, Arnold and Ronald, were in grade six. Newcomers in grade one were Robert Robertson, Jack Greentree, Dan Mitchell, LaVerne Sutherland, Lawrence Campbell, Bill Hawkes and Joyce and Ruby Mitchell (from the Wapiti mine area).

In 1942 and 1943 Gilbert Mitchell, Jack and Jerry Greentree and Ruth and Myret Sutherland had entered the first grade. Victor Johns, a grade five student from Klondyke Trail School had arrived early in 1944, the Sutherlands and the Johnstons had moved away from the district and for the next fall term there were only 14 pupils registered.

Neighboring Pipestone Creek district had 11 pupils registered and "Pop" Cavett was asked to teach them in his classroom. He kept attendance for them in a separate register. Arrangements were made to van the children and they began classes at Millarston in late October. Mr. David Whyte, Sr. was the bus driver; he used first a horse-drawn vehicle and later a car.

The Pipestone Creek pupils who attended Millarston that first year were Richard and Cecil Brooks, Gerald, Jim and Ken Hodgson, Shirley, Christine and Bernice Watson, Joan Watts, Nancy and Edna Wood.

In 1944 Philip Latos from the east end of the Millarston district was a grade two student. Marie Robertson and Douglas Greentree began their education in 1945. Gloria Jean Gerow and Georgina Watson began grade one in September 1946.

In the fall of 1946 new Pipestone Creek area pupils were Betty Bisgrove, Annie and Jack Hosker, Keith, Donna, Kenneth and Fern Penny. During 1947 the Sutherlands had returned to the Millarston district, and Hugh was in grade two and Brian in grade one.

The September 1947 term began with teacher, Miss Eileen Murray. Ethel Hawkes joined Cecil Brooks in grade nine, Elizabeth Bisgrove was in grade two, and Florence Mitchell and Dennis Brooks began grade one. Albert Gerow was a first grader in September 1948 and Louise Greentree returned to take grade nine instruction. By this time there were only twelve pupils and the school softball team had Florence Mitchell from the second grade as their "spare" player.

Millarston School closed in June 1949. The ten remaining pupils are shown with their teacher as they had



Millarston School pupils, June term, 1949.
Back row: L. to R. Dan Mitchell, Bob Robertson, Jack Murray, Gerald Hodgson, Louise Greentree, teacher Eileen Murray.
Next row: L. to R. Ken Hodgson, Gilbert Mitchell, Jim Hodgson.
Front row: Florence Mitchell, Marie Robertson.

their picture taken at the Leslie residence in Dimsdale enroute to the Grande Prairie Swimming Pool.

The Millarston schoolhouse during its 19 years saw many box socials, Christmas concerts, school fairs and numerous regularly-scheduled dances. It stands in the same spot today and many who pass by are reminded of Mrs. Agnes Millar MacAlister for whom it was named.

In recent years the school building has been home to several new families who have come to the area.

Wapiti Coal Mines

by Seath Sutherland and Ray Campbell

From early days outcroppings of coal had been noticed on the Wapiti River hillsides, particularly along a two-mile frontage of the north bank. In the 1920's, a district man, Adolf Hugel, decided that the coal resources could provide a source of income for local residents.

Homesteaders were beginning to settle the more heavily-wooded areas adjacent to the river banks and needed every dollar that they could earn. So, many farmers became coal miners; others hauled the coal to the nearby towns of Wembley and Grande Prairie.



Ray Campbell hauling coal from Wapiti Mine to Grande Prairie.

Adolf Hugel operated on a comparatively low scale for the first few years. He was bought out by two local settlers, Nick Schneider and Bill Loskill, who had previously been miners in their native Germany. One of their introductions was the use of black powder blasting which greatly facilitated the removal of the coal. However, dynamite cost money, so a lot of the work was done with picks.

When it became necessary, as the tunnels went deeper into the hillside, two-by-four tracks were installed. On these tracks, coal cars about three by five feet and 18 inches deep, were pushed by hand. They had sloped-out ends and the four wheels were close together underneath so that the 1,000 pound load could be quickly tipped and dumped.

Some of the tunnels were 300 to 400 feet in length. Some distance back the coal seam dipped down, making it very difficult to push the loaded cars up to the surface. At this point the miners dug out a "room" approximately 40 feet across. They then worked this extra-wide vault back to the opening.

The invention of the coal cars showed the ingenuity of the homesteader. The wheels were made of transport trucks intended for carting grain binders over the district roads. The flanges of the steel rims exactly fitted the wooden tracks.

During peak production three mines were employing about 30 men. Although the miners' wages were only $1.50 a day and board, complaints were few. The most frequent one was, in the words of miner, Iain MacAlister, "The roof always dripped, and it was so low that soon your clothes were in a horrible mess," when he was interviewed by a Herald-Tribune reporter in 1962.

The mine operators were concerned for the safety of their workers and this was evidenced by the fact that there were few mishaps. Provincial government inspections were made yearly. The mine tunnels followed two coal seams about 200 feet above the level of the river. The top seam averaged between eight and twelve inches in thickness, while the bottom seam was about two feet thick. Each tunnel was shored-up with timbers high enough for a man to walk upright and with the opening wide enough for the coal cars. However, by springtime, the tremendous weight of rocks and earth left a passage little more than four feet in height. "So when that time came, you were always hitting your back on that mucky roof," Mr. MacAlister recalled.

The miners carried carbide-fired lamps on their caps, which at that time were made of canvas. A seasoned miner could hook on his lamp without taking his cap off and looking!--the novice could only look on admiringly.

Besides the Schneider-Loskill mine, to which most of the foregoing refers, a coal mine was opened east of their location by Hugh Campbell who later sold to Bob Ross. Others associated with this mine were John Van Hemert, Hugh Sinclair and Ole Augustine, overman, who took over the mine himself in 1935.



At back: L. to R. Sarah Wedell, Lizzie Schneider and their brother, Dave Wedell.
At front: seated, the John van Hemert family.

Another mine that operated briefly was under the direction of Frank Maas. Its next owners were Frank Pickles and his partner, a miner from Nordegg, Alberta. In the early 1940's Ray Campbell and Maurice O'Reilly bought this mine. However, Maurice later returned to mining in Drumheller for a time leaving Ray to assume full responsibilities.

A coal mine was operated for a short time one winter by Frank Gibney, Jack Elliott, and Frank Maas on the south bank of the Wapiti River. Wes Stephen, a farmer of the Dimsdale district was their only hauler.

Tom and Bill Mitchell also had a coal lease from 1933 to the early 40's, sub-contracting to the Aseltine brothers,

Bill and Chet. Miners who worked with them were Bill Davis, Bert George and Ray Campbell.

However, the Schneider-Loskill mine was the one that employed the largest number of workers and at one time operated six or more double shifts. Among these miners were Nick Schneider's brothers-in-law, Dave and Henry Wedell, Frank Maas, Bill Davis, Frank Lowes, Sam Strickland and fellow gold-miner "Ted", the Whytes (Dave, Sr., Dave, Jr., and George), the McNeils from Wembley, Sandy Thompson, Jim Kenneway, Pete McNally, Dick Greentree, Ronnie Bisgrove and Jock Navarro, a homesteader from DeBolt.



Loskill and Schneider Coal Mine - 1935 L. to R. Dave Whyte, Sr., Frank Maas, Jock Nevara, Annie Paul, ? ?, Lizzie Schnieder, Dave Wedell, Nick Schneider and son.

Seath Sutherland, one of the first coal haulers, made a trip to town during the winter of 1928 in weather that was 54 degrees below zero. It didn't seem much different than any other trip since they didn't have radios telling them how cold it was! They were glad to have the work even though a load only earned them $2 to $2.50 or approximately $50 a month.

Early roads up the Wapiti River hill were built by the homesteaders using horses, walking plows and fresnos. Six-horse outfits were sometimes needed to pull almost five tons of coal up the steep river banks. Tribute has been paid to Wes Stephen by his former fellow haulers as the best "skinner" of a six-horse outfit.

A typical day for a hauler consisted of early rising and making the trip down to the mine. Next they loaded "by the armstrong method" and then proceeded to get the outfit to the top of the hill. The trip to town took about four hours--if the roads were good. While in town they called on former customers, and, if possible, found some new ones.

Other haulers were Ray Campbell, George Watson, Gaby Basly, Jack Murray, Norman Rennie, Frank Pickles, Sam Pickles, George Stephen, Iain MacAlister, Harry Hodgson, and Wilf Bisgrove. Apologies to any haulers or miners that we have missed.

Many of the miners, and in some cases their families, lived in shacks and log cabins from late fall until time to return to their homesteads for spring seeding.

A cook-shack was operated by Mary Kenneway for those who did not have families living at the mine-site. Her helpers were Annie Paul, Sarah Wedell, Margaret Franz and Sarah Hubert.

In later years the mine owners used trucks, and when conditions improved farmers could put all their time into improving their homesteads. Due to the fire burning in one of the mines it was soon closed and the coal-mining era ended.

The George Bain Family

by George Bain

I was born the son of Duncan and Helen Bain on the 23rd of February, 1924 on my parents' homestead, SW 24-70-7-W6 on the banks of the Wapiti River. I was the youngest of the family of two sisters, Jessie and Helen and two brothers, Norman and Duncan.

I attended the Millarston School for ten years, starting the first day and year it was open, September, 1930. My teachers were: Mr. Rennick who taught for two years and had twin boys and a girl; Miss Lewis who was great in physical education and coached Millarston pupils to obtaining the shield for the two years that she was there; my oldest sister, Jessie Erskine who was very strict on discipline; Don Caldwell who remained for two years and liked to play marbles with the boys and as long as we would let him win occasionally he would play all afternoon; Mr. Bill Sparling managed to get me through Grade nine in 1938-39. That pretty well sums up my education.

In 1938 my folks moved across the Wapiti River. Here they started a small store and the first post office in what is now the Grovedale district. After the store and post office were established, the next project was the formation of a school district and the building of a school. In 1947 I married the local school teacher, Elenor Bulford, who was from Bezanson.

During the next eight years I worked for George Stephen's Sawmills located 40 miles south of Grande Prairie. Also working there were a number of the same guys with whom I had gone to school. In 1955 Elenor and I and our four kids, Cheryl, Betty, Jody and Ellen moved to Valemount, B.C. where I worked for five years for Hystad Brothers Sawmill.

In 1960 we moved back to our original farm near Millarston where we resided until 1976. In this period, from 1956 to 1976 we had four more children, Donna, Cindy, Elmer and Brent. We started raising cattle and farming. I also worked for North Canadian Sawmills.



Duncan Bain, Frank Maas, Bill Sparling, George Bain, Duncan Bain, Sr., Mrs. Bain, Helen Bain, ? ?, Boyd Cooke, Louise Greentree (1935).

By 1975 Grande Prairie was having a boom in growth due to Procter and Gamble's pulp mill. This caused the price of land near Grande Prairie to increase. Many quarter sections with scenic properties were being subdivided. This was the case with the one next to our home quarter along the Wapiti banks. We soon found that range cattle and acreage owners didn't mix well. So we sold our property in the Millarston district and moved to a larger farm in the Elmworth area still within easy range of the Wapiti River. Our son Jody, and his wife, Rita, joined us on this venture. They how have a daughter, Robin.

We have two boys who are still at home and going to school. Brent is in grade nine at Elmworth and Elmer in grade 12 at Beaverlodge. The rest of our family have all married and are in the following areas: Cindy Arlint in Grovedale, Donna Mayne in Clairmont, Cheryl McEwan in Grande Prairie, and Betty Gubbe and Ellen McAusland both in Fort McMurray.

Gabriel (Gaby) Basly

by Mrs. Paulette Hrychiw and Mrs. Yvonne MacAlister

Gabriel Rene was born in Gennevilliers, France on March 28, 1885. Little is known of his early years except through papers left when he died.

According to some army papers he had been in Canada as early as 1907, apparently helping his brother-in-law and sister on their homestead in Big Valley. He remained there until August, 1914, when, according to an old letter, he was called back to France to report to the 102nd Infantry Regiment in the communications division.

In June of 1916 he was awarded a citation for bravery. The comments of his commanding officer were "keeping communications open with the company while under heavy bombardment during the attacks of the 15th, 16th and 17th of June 1916". He was awarded the "Croix de Guerre" (War Cross with Bronze Star) for his bravery. After the war he came back to Big Valley with Joe Pivert.

During the years 1939-1949 Gaby rented land from Margaret George of Vancouver. This land was NE 1-71-7-W6, NE 25-70-7-W6 and NW 36-70-7-W6 containing about 480 acres. He worked the land with his many horses. He was very fond of them and spent a lot of time petting and talking to them.

His many friends would come and stay or visit with him between jobs. He also hauled coal from the Spring Creek and Wapiti mines, hauled wood, and was generally fairly busy.

Since as long as we can remember, he had always lived with our family (Andrew Pivert's) and been called Uncle Gaby by all of us kids, although he was our father's cousin.



Yvonne MacAlister, son Douglas on horse, Toby, and Gaby Basly hauling water for cook house.

Sometime in the 1940's Gaby started working for George Stephen as a bull cook in the lumber camp at Big Mountain. He was responsible for sweeping the cook house and bunk houses and keeping them supplied with wood and water. He was also responsible for ringing the get-up bell, which was a large bull gear from an Allis-Chalmers "cat" that was beat on with a hammer. If the bell didn't get them up, a large handful of snow was in order!

During the next few years he lived fairly quietly with our family until his health began to fail. On May 2, 1966 "Uncle" Gaby died at the age of 80 years. His funeral was attended by a Royal Canadian Legion Guard of Honor.

Claude E. and Millicent Cavett

by Mrs. Juanita Johnston

Claude E. Cavett was born May 14, 1898 in Diller, Nebraska. He immigrated to Alberta in 1919 and settled east of Ponoka.

On July 4, 1922 he married Millicent Driver, who was born at Duhamel, Alberta, October 26, 1905. The wedding ceremony was celebrated at Edmonton, Alberta.



Claude E. Cavett.

Claude Cavett taught for one year at Concord School before attending Normal School and obtaining his Alberta teaching certificate. He returned to Concord School to teach two more years.

In 1930 the Cavett family moved to the Peace River Country. Claude's subsequent teaching posts were at the following schools: Percy, Clairmont, Millarston, Beaverlodge and Harry Balfour.

It was in 1941 that the Cavetts arrived in the Millarston district. Since the small, log teacherage would not accommodate a family of six, a large living room was added. The oldest daughter, Evangeline, born June 16, 1923 and daughter, Juanita, born April 18, 1925 were part of the family when they moved to the Grande Prairie area. Twin boys, Ronald and Arnold, were born February 18, 1931.

Raising mink became a side-line. An old horse could be purchased for $5. They were then butchered for mink feed. Since those were the days when rabbits were plentiful, they also provided a cheap source of feed. The schoolboys received five cents for each rabbit shot and delivered.

Sundays in the summer were spent going to Sunday School in the Millarston school-house. This was taught by Rev. Roskam. The rest of the day there were soft ball games or picnics at the Wapiti River to enjoy. Card games provided entertainment during the winter months. Neighbors often supplied horses and sleigh as transportation.

Millarston School was in a rather heavily-wooded area, and since it was not far from the river, sightings of bears were common. The following story appeared in a Grande Prairie newspaper:

TEACHER SHOOTS BEAR

Depredations of a black bear in the Millarston district were ended when Claude Cavett, school teacher, shot the animal after it had smashed the door of the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Johns, terrifying Mrs. Johns and her 13 year old son. The same bear is believed to have forced its way into the John's barn and carried off two lambs as well as injuring the ewe.

Evangeline is now Mrs. John Stregger and lives in Delta, B.C. They have two children, Bobby and Dianne.

Juanita married Ken Johnston, whose family also lived in the Millarston district for a few years. The Ken Johnstons now live in Rimbey, Alberta. They have four children, Wayne, Gary, Judi and Lorna.

Ronald and his wife, Eva, now living in Victoria, B.C., have two children, David and Cynthia. After serving in the Canadian Army for over 20 years, Ronald attended University and received his teaching certificate, the only one to follow in his father's footsteps.

Arnold and his wife, Jacqueline, have two children, Teresa and Mary Ellen. Arnold has served in the Canadian Air Force for over 25 years and is presently stationed in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Claude Cavett passed away August 26, 1957 and his widow, Millicent, passed away on December 21, 1970.

The William (Bill) Davies Family

Bill Davies came to Wembley, Alberta, Canada from Calgarick, Wales in 1928 with $3 in his pocket. However, he soon found a job with Wesley Stephen. Later, Wes' father, Gavin Stephen of the Dimsdale area, was his employer. Another job he had was as a miner in the Loskill-Schneider coal mine on the Wapiti River in 1931.



Cpl. Bill Davies, wife Daisy and Geoffrey.



Mrs. Reese, Jeffry Davies and his mother Daisy Davies.

In 1934 Bill married Daisy Reese whose mother had homesteaded NW 18-70-7-W6. They settled on the south 80 acres of NW 20-70-7-W6 in the Millarston area. They have one son, Jeffry, who was born in 1937.

Bill joined the army in 1939, and Daisy and young Jeff went to Richmond, B.C. to join her mother and her brother, Jeffry, who were living there by then.

The Bill Davies family continued to live in Richmond after Bill's discharge from the army in 1946. For a few years he earned his living by digging peat on Lulu Island, and later he worked in a concrete factory until his retirement.

Daisy has passed on, but Bill's sister, Phylis, lives with him. Daisy's brother, Jeffry, after moving to B.C., acquired a dairy herd and milked cows until he retired.



Daisy Davies and her brother Jeff Reese.

Bob Durston

as remembered by Seath Sutherland

I first met Bob Durston in the early 30's. He was working with Sam Skillen clearing brush on the Stephenson land.

He came from Killarney, Manitoba and his wife and son were still there. He filed on the homestead east of Iain MacAlister and built a small house there.

Bob Durston remained in the community for several years and during that time he cleared up a few acres and worked at various jobs in the area. The family later came to join him, but since his wife was in poor health, they eventually all returned to Killarney.

Bob was middle-aged when he lived here. He was a bit of a comedian and is still remembered for his rendition of "Where did you get that Hat?" at the Christmas concert.

The Albert (Bert) George Family

by Mrs. Nellie Gerow

Bert George was born in 1889 in Owen Sound, Ontario. He came to Nobleford, Alberta in 1905 and in 1910 married Helen (Nellie) Ferguson at Keho, Alberta. They moved to Lethbridge, Alberta where three of their four children were born, Isabel, Alberta (Gert) and Nellie.

Their next move was in 1918 to Grande Prairie where Bert owned and operated a taxi service. Their youngest daughter, Florence, was born in 1920. For several years the Georges lived at Vancouver, B.C. where he worked as bushman.

In approximately 1930 they returned to the Grande Prairie area and homesteaded in the Millarston district between 1932 and '33. Bert hauled coal for Nick Schneider; in the earlier years he drove four horses and later a truck.

In the early "forties" they moved to Fort St. John, B.C. where they were employed by Spinney's Camp, a stopping-place for truckers. Bert ran the gas pumps and Nellie looked after the cookhouse.



Mr. and Mrs. Bert George, with their first two great grandchildren (George and Ann Gerow), at their service station at Fort St. John in 1952.

In 1942 or '43 they returned to Grande Prairie. Bert worked with Jack Kilgour as a carpenter in the summer and logged for George Stephen in the wintertime. During this time they lived on their homestead again. In 1947 Bert looked after the commissary at Hystad's, about thirty miles south of Wembley.

In 1952 they again went to Fort St. John where he ran the Hi-way Service Station which he also owned. His wife passed away in 1956.

Bert married Ethel Jarvis, a long-time friend of the family, and they retired to Vegreville, Alberta. They remained in Vegreville until his death August 30, 1979. Ethel still resides there.

Bert had lived to see 15 grandchildren, 41 great-grandchildren and 11 great-great-grandchildren.

Lachlan (Don) Kennedy

by Seath Sutherland

I first met Don Kennedy in 1927 after I homesteaded the SW 32-70-7-W6. He had homesteaded the SE 31-70-7-W6 in the early 20's. He was living at this time on what was known as the "Reed place", N½ 30-70-7-W6, where there was a log house and barn.

In 1929 he built a house and a small barn on his own land. He also drilled a well which served for both of us. Don was a very good neighbor and he was very fond of children. During one period many of his horses died of sleeping sickness.

He was a bachelor and his place served as a half-way house for people going to Grande Prairie from the South Wapiti district. Some of these were: Ryans, Elfords, Elliotts, Plaxton and the fire ranger, Tommy Foote.

Lachlan Kennedy passed away in the early 40's after a short illness.

The Bill Loskill Family

by Marie Stamp

When hearing that Canada was the land of opportunity, Bill and a friend, Nick Schneider, came to Canada in the spring of 1926 at the age of 29 years. They were both born in the small town of Speicer, Germany, Bill on October 1, 1895. Being new to the country brought them into a variety of jobs, the first being on a farm in Star City, Saskatchewan.

Bill came up to this area in 1927 to work on the farm of Don Noyes, and spent many hours breaking land with up to ten horses on the plow. Winter work during this time was at the George Stephen's Sawmill. In 1930 Bill bought a half section for $1,700 that was Soldier Settlement land. At this time he and partner, Nick Schneider, also set up the coal mine which eventually employed eight to 17 men. The coal was hauled to Grande Prairie by four to six horses on a sleigh. One of the first customers for the mine was the Catholic Church.

During this period Bill acquired a ready-made family and companion in the form of Hazel Robertson and boys Raymond, Roy (now farming at DeBolt) and Bob (now ranching at Pink Mountain, B.C.). With logs gotten out nearby, Ollie Augustine, a carpenter of that era, laboriously (one log per day) dove-tailed a log house and barn to accomodate the new family. As of today, both structures are standing firm and sound. This new place on the road served as an overnight stop for many a horse and traveller to enjoy Bill's hospitality, strong coffee, and a roll-your-own cigarette. An evening wouldn't have been complete without a card game of 500. Evenings of 500



Bill Loskill breaking the sod in 1928.

were also a social event that rotated from home to home during this time.

Due to a small coal seam, mining was soon over, and leaving Hazel in charge of the farm for the winter, Bill went out to work at the Grande Prairie Airport, Peace River Bridge, Hudson Hope Coal Mine, and Hystad Brothers Sawmill. During this time the wages ranged from $2 a day to $25 per month.

Bill and Hazel had two girls join the root picking brigade, Marie and Joyce. Marie, having married the next door farmer, Gus Stamp, purchased Bill's home place in 1958 when Bill retired. The joining of Bill's half-section along with some of the Stamp family farm land near Wembley has kept everyone busy and working together. Gus and Marie have two boys, Kelvin and Darren, who will hopefully carry on this tradition of farming and make Grandpa's many hours of toil for his family worthwhile. Joyce has been the city dweller of the family but can now be seen in Wembley along with two sons, Todd and Kevin, who carry on Grandpa's wit and adventurous spirit.

Bill passed away January 23, 1979, at 84 years of age.



Bill Loskill hauling coal up the Wapiti hill in 1932.

The MacAlister Family

Although she was of Scottish descent, Mrs. Agnes MacAlister was born in England in 1882. Her childhood was spent in Scotland.

In 1913, recently widowed, she came to Canada with her wee son, Iain, and friend, Janet Hunter. She met and married Walter MacAlister in New Brunswick. He and his family had lived there for many years and operated a lumber business. They had three children, Margaret (Peggy), Walter, Jr. and Don.

Walter and Agnes MacAlister came to the Peace River country in 1926. They lived for a short time in the Flying Shot area on the Goyne place, north of A. Cameron's. Their next move was to the Equity district, near Sexsmith. Peggy and Walter attended school while they lived in this district. They later settled southwest of Dimsdale near the Wapiti river.

The MacAlisters were active in the new community, along the Wapiti. They had three school-age children, but the nearest school was six to eight miles to the north. The distance and the difficult road conditions made it impossible for the children to attend a school during those first years. Peggy went to stay with good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fredericksen (the former Janet Hunter, known as Hun), who lived near the Wapiti School, and so was a pupil at that school for a short time.

Since a school was badly needed, meetings were held with friends and neighbors. Two of the first trustees, Mrs. MacAlister and Mr. Laplace, wrote many letters to school inspector Balfour and to the Department of Education in Edmonton and also had meetings with them. A map of the proposed district was submitted showing a school location suitable for everyone.



Mr. and Mrs. Walter MacAlister, Sr., Peggy, Walter and Don 1923-24.

Millarston was the name agreed on for the school. The "Millar" part was Mrs. MacAlister's maiden name, but since there was another Millar in the province, they had to add the "ston". So it stood, finished by 1930. It still stands, across the road from Walter's home quarter, 50 years later.

Once the school was in operation the school-house was available for many activities. Sunday church services were held; ministers, whatever their denomination, were always welcome. The proceeds of the community projects went toward needs of the school.

The already busy Women's Institute was working on a quilt which would be raffled to obtain funds for a piano. Whist drives were held and in the fall of 1932 a seed fair for the children was promoted at which Peggy won some alfalfa seed as a prize.



Walter, Don, Agnes and Iain MacAlister.

The W.I. held their annual meeting December 22, 1932 at the home of Mrs. T. Brumpton. That was the biggest meeting of the year with 32 members in attendance. Officers were elected for the ensuing year: Pres. Mrs. Fredericksen, Vice-Pres. Mrs. Brumpton, Sec.-Tres. Mrs. MacAlister, Directors: Mrs. Cahoon, Mrs. Laplace and Mrs. Hawkes, Auditors: Mrs. Farr and Mrs. Sutherland. Mr. Jean Laplace and Mr. Soren Fredericksen audited the 1932 books. The next meeting would be held January 26, 1933 at the home of Netta Stephen. The group was active for many years.

The Christmas concerts were great events. One during the 1932-33 term, when Miss Lewis was the teacher, was long remembered. Mr. MacLean reported in his December 1932 column that there were Highland dancers in full dress, many entertaining skits, and George Bain, a lad of eight years, sang a solo, "Silent Night". There were 205 people in attendance to enjoy such an evening as only those days could produce. Last of all came Santa with treats and gifts for all the children.

Many card parties were held in the school-house. A box social and dance, often put on to raise money for children's Christmas treats, was always a special event. It could prove to be a thrilling evening for the girls if the right fellow became her partner and a problem for the guys if they didn't make the right choice. Often hints were given by the girls or the younger set. Iain was noted for playing his mouth organ and could sometimes be persuaded to do so at these events.

During the first years on the homestead, mail and supplies were obtained through Dimsdale post office and store. Thus they became acquainted with the many store owners at that point and latterly at Pipestone Creek when that store and post office were opened.

The following is taken from J.C. MacLean's July 12, 1934 column in the Northern Tribune:

"This community heard with regret the news that Mrs. MacAlister and family are leaving this district to make their home on Vancouver Island, near Victoria, Iain MacAlister finally having decided to go into partnership with his uncle."

The family returned to Millarston in 1936.

There was great interest in softball in the late 30's and the Millarston team became known for being hard to beat. Iain, as third baseman, and Walter, as pitcher, played until the mid 50's. All local picnics and sports days saw the MacAlisters there. Everyone turned out for the Lake Saskatoon sports. Huallen team provided the most competition for the Millarston players.

The local boys, including Don, who went off to war in the early 40's, left the community concerned for all of them. Mrs. MacAlister and all the other mothers fixed parcels and did knitting for their sons and the Red Cross as well. Don was wounded in action but arrived home safely.

Walter, Sr. passed away at the age of 73 on March 1, 1944. Iain, Walter and Don were left to continue looking after their mother and the land. Walter, Jr. now owns that quarter, SE 19-70-7-W6.

Peggy was married to Jack Bennett of Fort St. John, B.C. in June 1946; Don married Betty Brumptom in April 1949; Iain married Joan Watts in November 1949; and Walter married Yvonne Pivert in July 1951.

At the age of 75 Mrs. MacAlister had a great desire to raise tame bees. With the help of Walter and Yvonne, she supplied honey to all the family. She enjoyed many birthdays and holidays with the growing family and saw some of her 12 grandchildren married.

She also tended her own little house, a bunkhouse that had been moved from Fredericksen's to Iain's yard. She had many flowers growing around it and in window boxes. Family and friends would often stop for tea with "Gran" and have a nice visit with her. Her home-made jams, especially the rose hip and raspberry, were extra good and well remembered. The children were treated to bread and jam as many visitors before them had been.

The late 60's brought a bad spell and a heart attack with the result that some time was spent in the hospital. While waiting for a room at Pioneer Lodge she was with Walter and Yvonne for a short time. She moved to Pioneer Lodge in 1969.

"Gran" passed away at 92 after having spent two years in Pioneer Lodge and from 1971 to November 1974 in Swan Haven Nursing Home where she received good care. She always showed concern for her fellow patients as she had been concerned for those in need during the many years before.

The Iain MacAlister Family

by Joan G. Yates

Iain MacAlister was born in Brandon, Manitoba, on February 4, 1909, to Alfred and Agnes Exley. His father died during World War I and his mother later married Walter MacAlister, senior, they had three more children, Margaret (Peggy), Walter and Donald.

During Iain's childhood, he lived in many towns across Canada from New Westminister, B.C. to Hampton, New Brunswick, and back again.

One day, in St. Martin's, New Brunswick, when Iain was 17, he saw a brochure of the latest frontier, the Peace River Country. On the cover was a picture of Ohmi Stewart of Wembley, breaking the sod with 22 horses. Iain was impressed, to put it mildly. When fall came, due to his persuasion, the whole family boarded a harvest excursion train for Calgary. They were accompanied by Miss Janet Hunter, affectionately known as "Hun" to the MacAlister family.

After a stint at ranching near Beiseker and Irricana, Alberta, to make some money, Iain came north to Grande Prairie. He stayed with Jack Goyne in the Flying Shot district for awhile, waiting till he could file on a homestead. Shortly after his 18th birthday, he filed on NE 18-70-7-W6 along the Wapiti, in what was to become the Millarston district.



Back: Iain and Joan MacAlister.
Front: Vicki, Rob and Larry MacAlister.

Homesteading being the not-too-profitable venture it was, Iain, like most other homesteaders, worked out much of the time in those early years of the 30's. He worked for Don Noyes, at his saw mill and on his farm. Iain also worked at Loskill and Schneider's coal mine. In the war years, he took his truck and hauled on the Alaska Highway during its construction. He spent one very unprofitable winter ('35 - '36) at Goldfield (now Uranium City, northern Saskatchewan) working in a cord wood camp. He came home from that venture starved, tired and dead broke, but chalked it up to experience.

When farming became a little more profitable, Iain began to rent land to farm along with his own quarter. At various times he had land rented from Mrs. Helen Bain, Tom Brumpton, and Daisy Reese. Later as land became available near his own, he bought, ending up with five quarters in a block. He bought the homesteads of Nick Schneider, George Watson, Ray Campbell and Jeff Reese, and each quarter was always known by the name of its owner, a practise continued today by other members of Iain's family.

In the early days of homesteading, Iain travelled by horseback and used horses to farm his land. But during the early thirties he got a truck, and was never without one from that time on, everything from a ton to a three ton. Whatever he had, it was well known to everyone in the district, for Iain hauled grain, livestock, coal, lumber, household effects, people, or whatever anyone needed him to haul, as well as hauling for his own needs.

For many years, Iain worked on Don Noyes' threshing outfit, but as time went on, he acquired his own separator, and began to thresh for his neighbors. He continued doing this until combines took over the harvesting job during the early fifties. He also used to saw and split wood around the district, building his own rigs to do this. He had a small sawmill on the farm, too, and sawed lumber for granaries, pig pens and so on.

After many years of seemingly confirmed bachelorhood, in 1949, Iain married Joan Watts, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A.K. Watts of Pipestone Creek. On June 19, 1950, a son, Lawrence Blair, was born to them. He was followed by another son, Robert Kingsford on November 22, 1951 and a daughter, Vicki Joan, on November 20, 1952.

With the acquisition of a family of his own, Iain expanded his farming operations and no longer worked out. He had long had a small herd of cattle, and he now began to breed it up to Aberdeen Angus, and later added some Charolais. He also went into pigs in a larger way, at one time even trying Landrace.

Iain will be remembered by many as an ardent promoter of the game of soft ball, as it used to be called. He played for Dimsdale and Millarston, and many a Sunday afternoon he went around the district and picked up a truck load of ball players and fans. Third base was his favorite position. He played regularly until he was in his early forties.

Later, when his own sons and nephews got to the age of ball playing, he took on the job of coaching Little League, both at Dimsdale and Wembley, at different times.

Another leisure time activity that Iain enjoyed was drama. Whenever there was a play put on in the Millarston district, in the early days, you were likely to find Iain involved. He played the mouth organ, too, and spent many happy hours at the pastime. But probably he was best known for his wit and ability to tell a story. He had a way with a story that, while it sometimes stretched reality, was always entertaining, and he could keep an audience laughing for hours.

During later years, Iain found great enjoyment in square dancing and he and his "little woman" belonged to the Wembley Whirlers for several years, taking their turn at being on the executive of that club, too.

Iain was also an active member of the Pipestone Creek Mutual Telephone executive, and a onetime member of Wembley's Chamber of Commerce.

In 1950, Iain discovered he had a heart condition and would have to take medication for it the rest of his life. He continued to live a very active life, although he did have occasional sessions when he had to slow down for awhile. On December 11, 1970, he passed away from a heart attack.

Iain's sons and daughter have now grown, married and have children of their own. Larry married Janice Hodges and they have two little girls, Kathy Jo and Chanelle. Rob married Pat Murphy and they have a daughter, Jennifer and a son, Danny. Vicki married Sheldon Hotte and they have two boys, Iain and Laine. Both Larry and Rob are farming their father's land and trucking gravel and logs. Vicki, in leisure moments left over from raising the boys and keeping books for her electronics husband, is making a name for herself in the cultural world with her art work.

Iain's wife, Joan (or Billi, as she is sometimes known) became a teacher shortly before Iain's death and taught at Wembley for five years. In August of 1973, she married George Yates and they now live on a farm at Buffalo Lakes, where George farms and Joan writes.

Walter MacAlister Family

by Mrs. Yvonne MacAlister

Walter and I, Yvonne, (nee Pivert) were married July 12, 1951 in the office of Reverend Hugh Pritchard, minister of St. Paul's United Church, Grande Prairie. Relatives from both our families gathered at my parents' home for a lunch before seeing us off on our honeymoon trip to Fort St. John, B.C. There we visited with Walter's sister, Peggy.

We returned to make our home on the farm land that Walter had been purchasing over the previous few years. The home quarter, NE 20-70-7-W6, once belonged to John Van Hemert.



Walter MacAlister family Christmas, 1965.

We have completed almost 30 years of married life and raised two boys and two girls. Douglas married Carol Reinitz and they have two sons. Bruce is married to the former Valerie Klassen. Margaret married Grant Cissell and they have given us our first granddaughter. Monica, our youngest, is taking grade 12 in Grande Prairie.

Walter had always loved the game of softball and became the main pitcher for the team from the Millarston school. This ball team remained unbeaten for many years.

He later played with the team from Dimsdale that won the Northern Alberta Fastball Championship for 1951. Elwood Rooney was their manager and team players were Walter, Vernon Hawkes, Frank Stoll, Ken, Gordon, Dennis and Ed McIntosh, George Bain and Bill Hawkes who was the young one in training. This game won them the Grande Prairie Legion cup, which should show the inscription "Dimsdale", but it was never presented to them. Other players were involved over the years. Many Sundays saw family groups gather for their social get-togethers at the ball games.

Walter had also played with the Stephen's Sawmill group when George had the mill at Crooked Creek. They won the Softball Challenge Cup 1948. The men on this team were A. Seymour, W. MacAlister, P. Diemert, Bob Seymour, George Bain, K. Johnson, D. Brown, B. Carll, Len Erikson, and Wid Rintoul. Mrs. Gladys Stephen still has the cup which George had loved to show and talk about. They were his great team! the WINNERS!! representatives of Stephen's Sawmills!

In the late 1950's fastball began to lose its popularity and hardball took over. Although they continued to do well, the heart seemed to go out of the team since their favorite was still softball.

By this time our families were growing, games were being played farther away, time and gas must be considered carefully. Wives and children were finding ball playing every Sunday was too demanding. We now had two young sons. I had a little fling at a ladies' softball team, but two ball-playing parents didn't go over very well.

The children's schooling and interests were beginning to be more important in our lives. Walter had been involved with the lumber business until 1967-68. But the times were now changing and the big companies were taking over lumbering in the area. So it was back to the farm again and for the next ten years production of pork was our mainstay.

I had many interests that I wished to pursue, but they must wait awhile longer. At five years of age, in 1967, Monica had open heart surgery. She was the 1,000th case of open heart surgery at the University Hospital in Edmonton. She is now quite well and facing a very normal life style thanks to progress in the world of medicine. Douglas became involved with Cubs and Sea Cadets and earned a trip to Comox, B.C. Here he learned the ways of the Navy. The trials of 4-H kept the whole family busy for awhile resulting in Douglas winning Reserve Grand Champion one year. Cubs and hockey became Bruce's world. He was the first member of the family to go for a ride in a small plane. Margaret became interested in the world of art. In 1974 she was sponsored by the South Peace Horticultural Society as a contestant in the Miss Grande Prairie Pageant. In the early 70's, Monica followed the trend to mini-bike riding. This had become the latest mode of travel for the young.

In 1969 the South Peace Horticultural Society came into being; I was a founding member with Russell Burgess and Jim Kluyt. We put on a big display in the Regional College for the visit of Queen Elizabeth to the Grande Prairie area. The club is still active, but members of our modern, fast-moving society have little time for gardening now.

In the spring of 1977 a small flower shop, Yvonne's "Country Flower Shop", was started in my own home. The aim was for the personal touch in Horticulture classes of from 33 to one. Information was presented to 175 very interested people in the areas of Grande Prairie, Eaglesham, Rycroft, Spirit River and Fairview.

A great deal of personal pleasure came from producing flower arrangements for the weddings of son Bruce and daughter Margaret. There were many other special events and weddings of special friends near and far, requiring such assistance.

Books and supplies have been made available to bird lovers for the past few years. One very special interest has been in the Trumpeter Swans. A club was started in 1976, the groundwork having been begun in March 1975. I was president until 1980, but found it necessary to resign due to health reasons.

Other activities have included helping Gran MacAlister for several years with tame bees when she was past 75. This provided many interesting moments! Another involvement was as director for the Grande Prairie Memorial Society for a number of years in the late 70's. At this time Walter was involved with the Rural Electrification Association.

The Ed McIntosh Family

by Ed McIntosh

I am the fourth son of Jack and Mabel McIntosh. I was born in Grande Prairie in 1931 and spent my boyhood on the farm at Dimsdale, attending Wapiti School and the Grande Prairie High School. After completing high school in 1949, I worked on the farm until 1952, when I joined the DOT weather service in Edmonton. The next five years were spent at Whitehorse, Yukon.

On October 28, 1953, I married Dorothy Partlow, the only child of Eric Partlow. After our stay in Whitehorse, two years were spent at the Grande Prairie Airport, with the DOT. On May 10, 1959, we moved to the Agar farm south of Dimsdale.

This farm is part of the old "Watson Brothers' Ranch". The original buildings were built in the middle of sec 34-70-7-W6. The building site was moved west to the present location by Dad Stephen in the early 20's.

Dad Stephen and his son George farmed the land until 1940, when Stanley, Irwin and Lelia Agar bought sec 34. The Agars farmed very successfully for 19 years, selling out to us in 1959. The farm has been enlarged by purchase of the Bill Mitchell place, a quarter of the Brown land from George Stephen and a part of Dad Stephen's land from Jessie Erskine.

The first fields were small patches cleared of stumps and dead fall on which pea vine hay was made. Then in 1910, Bill Mitchell broke 40 acres along the Correction Line. More land was broken each year with the final 27 acres brushed and broken in 1962.

The early years produced good crops of wheat. The cropping pattern gradually changed to wheat, oats, and barley and some fall rye during the 40's. Then Creeping Red Fescue became a major crop. It in turn gave way to rapeseed, during the late 60's. Now rapeseed and barley are the only crops grown.



Left to right: Don, Glen, Ed, Norm, Dorothy, Grandma McIntosh and Marjorie McIntosh.

Over the years, wild oats were the greatest problem. However, chemical herbicides used extensively during the 70's have almost cured the problem.

Our family consists of three boys and one girl. Don born at Whitehorse, Yukon in 1955, Norman, born at Grande Prairie in 1957, Margie in 1961 and Glen born in 1963. Don lives in Edmonton, after getting a B.A. at the University of Alberta. Norm is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin. He played hockey for Wisconsin for four years and earned a degree in Business Administration. Margie and Glen are in high school at Grande Prairie.

The farm has been good to us over the years, but of course there have been some bad times. Like the fall of 1964, 34 inches of rain from June 10 to October 1. That was the year we dualled up all the wheels and still got stuck in the mud. Cold, clear weather in November enabled the harvest to be completed.

There have also been dry years followed by wet falls such as 1976, when we plowed ruts all over the fields. Harvest seems to be a difficult season and a lack of moisture during the growing season, the most difficult problem to overcome.

The J.H. Murray Family

by Eileen Wald

My father, John Henry Murray, born in Kent, England in 1897, came to Canada with his parents and two brothers and two sisters. They pioneered the farming area around Rama, near Yorkton, Saskatchewan.



John and Agnes Murray, 50th wedding anniversary, 1969.

Upon his return from World War I (he had enlisted at the age of 17) he again took up the life of farming. On Christmas Day, 1919 he married Agnes Kilgour whose family were homesteading in the adjoining district of Buchanan.

In the late 20's the farm newspapers carried stories of the "Wheat King", Herman Trelle. Letters to the Home Loving Hearts Section of the Free Press Prairie Farmer told glowing stories of land to be had for homesteading in the Peace River Country. So, at this time, many prairie people were looking to the parkland areas to the north.

Two of these families to set out for Grande Prairie were the Murrays in April, 1929, and the family of Mrs. Murray's mother, consisting of her husband William Gabler, son Clarence (now living in Grande Prairie city), son Cyril and daughter Viola, (both presently living in Victoria, B.C.). They had made the trip in December of the previous year.

Early in 1929, Jack Murray made arrangements for his settler's effects to be transported by railroad box cars. These consisted of furniture, such as a Winnipeg couch and other household articles, machinery as well as cattle, horses and two sheep and a dog who accompanied his master on the freight train. His wife and four young daughters travelled to their new destination by passenger train. Two recollections of this trip are of passing by extensive burned-over areas and seeing "millions" of mauve-colored wild crocuses.

In early summer the Murrays started out to choose their homestead land south of the Wapiti River in what is now the Grovedale district. They experienced fording the swift-moving Wapiti River in a wagon whose box might float away if taken through deep water. Some brave souls travelled across on a raft, the animals must walk or swim. Later, three of the horses, not too content with their new home, tried to walk back to Saskatchewan, (had been seen going through Grande Prairie's main street and were caught up with in the vicinity of Clairmont).

Teepees of poplar trees served as temporary shelters for some of the new settlers. In due course, the new family occupied a log cabin on land now owned by Einar Olson, the Gablers were living in a cabin south of them. However, their dream of becoming homesteaders was not yet to come true as the land was as yet unsurveyed. So they were "squatters" (no longer able to obtain permits as in previous years). The Gabler family later made their home on the NW 4-70-6-W6.

It soon became apparent that there would be no school in the new district for some time (in fact it was 15 years!), so with two school-age children the Murrays were again on the move. By August they had settled at Patterson's hay meadow to the northwest of Flying Shot Lake and



Four Murray girls (1940's) L. to R. Joyce, Vivian, Eileen and Jean.



Jack Murray, Jr.

the girls' classmates were the Tissingtons, Sinclairs, Eskdales, Smarts, Hugels, Ross', Bains, N. Erskine and G. Smithard at the Flying Shot School.

Sufficient hay had been made through the summer to provide winter feed for their animals and give the owner his share. Great quantities of large, delicious saskatoons grew nearby the Flying Shot Lake home and soon became a favorite dessert treat. However, there would soon be new classmates to meet as in March, 1930 the Murray family would settle in the Dimsdale district on land they were to rent from W.C. Dillon who was at that time residing at Vernon, B.C.

In 1934 we set out, along with the new baby, John, Jr. to settle into a new home on the north bank of the Wapiti in the Millarston district. A new log house had been constructed and still stands today in its original location on SW 27-70-7-W6. Wild strawberries and blueberries were plentiful, at that time and buffalo skulls could still be found.

Now began the work of clearing and breaking land. In due time the fields would provide some income, but for several years hauling coal to Grande Prairie with horses provided a means of livelihood. Coal was mined from the Wapiti and Spring Creek banks. During World War II, Jack Murray again served in the Canadian Army.

By the late 1940's the homestead began to look more like a farm and neighbors became aware of the owner's interest in Aberdeen Angus cattle. Several were prize-winners at local fairs and many helped to improve the quality of north-country herds as well as some at more distant points.

Friends and neighbors will long remember Mrs. Murray's plantings of fruit trees, flowering shrubs and peonies.

Jack Murray's death occurred January 31, 1978. His widow still lives in their latest home built in 1967 in the Dimsdale district on land once homesteaded by George Wisdom and now owned by her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Wald (Eileen).

Jean did not marry and resides in Issaquah, Washington (a suburb of Seattle). Vivian is now Mrs. Frank Smith, has three sons and a daughter and calls Calgary home. Joyce, Mrs. Bernard Flynn of Edmonton has a son and two daughters. Jack married Rosalie Sheridan (an Irish lass who was for a time a nurse at the Grande Prairie hospital), has twins (a boy and a girl) and another son. He is employed by Alberta Wheat Pool, Calgary.

The Andrew (Andy) Pivert Family

by Mrs. Jeanne Pivert

My husband Andrew was born Alphonse Andre Charles Pivert November 11, 1895, in Epinay, France. He and his brother, Joe, were sent to Canada in 1911 as boys of 16 and 14 years of age to live with an uncle in Big Valley, Alberta.

I met my husband, Andrew, early in 1928 at a community gathering. We were married that October in Castor, Alberta, where I had been raised from the age of three years. I was born in St. Jean, Iberville, Quebec, February 4, 1906.

After our marriage we settled in Big Valley where Andrew had a threshing outfit and some rented land. During these years in Big Valley our first son and daughter were born, Roland in 1929 and Suzanne in 1931.

We first heard of the "Peace Country" from Andrew's brothers, Maurice and Joe, who had come to Grande Prairie to farm. We decided to move there because it offered a better chance to have a place of our own, and, like everyone during the hard times, we were hoping for a better life.

We left Big Valley on October 23, 1934, with most of our household possessions loaded on a truck pulling a home-made caboose which was heated with a coal-oil stove. We travelled over good roads through Stettler, Lacombe, Wetaskiwin and Edmonton, stopping along the way to say goodbye and visit with friends and family.

On November 2, 1934, we arrived at Andrew's brother's place. They lived about one mile north of Grande Prairie Airport. It had taken us about ten days to make the trip. We lived with my husband's family until the beginning of May, at which time we moved to Grande Prairie where Andrew got a job as a mechanic in the "Chev" garage.

We liked the look of the country right away. It did not have the bare, desert look of the prairies and in the spring the freshness and new greens were beautiful. The people seemed to be more friendly then than they are now. We lived in the town for the summer. Our second daughter, Yvonne, was born there in 1935.

The following month we went back to Big Valley to pick up our threshing machine, but while there, winter closed in early, and we remained in Big Valley until early summer. We returned to Grande Prairie, leaving the threshing machine behind. In the spring of 1936 Andrew went back to Big Valley alone. He brought back the threshing machine by train along with our furniture and four cows.



Pivert family: Roland, Andrew, Jeanne with Paul in front, Suzanne with Paulette in front, Yvonne (1945).



Outfit used by Andrew Pivert on return trip to Big Valley (1935) L. to R. Andrew, Roland, Suzanne and Jeanne.

We lived in town for another three years while Andrew worked as a mechanic. In the spring of 1939 we moved to the Margaret George farm which Andrew's cousin, Gaby Basly, was renting. We had to build on to the existing house to make room for the family.

In the summer of 1943 our twins, Paul and Paulette, were born. At that time, when many things were rationed, we got a little bonus because of the twins. They didn't have much need for things like sugar, jam, coffee, etc., so the rest of the family enjoyed the extra supplies!

Roland, Suzanne and Yvonne were attending Flying Shot School which was about three miles north-east of us. They usually rode a horse to school. Lucky Tree School was opened in the fall of 1947, in time for Paul and Paulette to start school.

In the spring of 1950 we purchased the N½ 21-70-7-W6 from Bert George. There was a beautiful log house on it. The main reason we bought this farm was because it was close to Millarston School. However, when fall came Millarston was closed as there were not enough children in the area to make it worthwhile to keep this school open.

That fall our eldest daughter, Suzanne, was married to Bill Carll. Roland, our eldest son, was serving with the Armed Forces in Wainwright. The following summer our second daughter, Yvonne, was married to Walter MacAlister. Our children were beginning to leave the nest.

Now that we were farther from a school, Andrew had to drive the twins the five miles to and from Lucky Tree every day. Needless to say, when winter came the twins stayed home very often. The roads weren't cleaned off as they are now and our green 1929 Ford wasn't made for deep snow.

In December, 1951, Suzanne and Bill had a daughter, Trudy, making us grandparents for the first time. In February, 1952, Yvonne and Walter made us grandparents again with our first grandson, Douglas.

In April, 1953, Roland left for Korea where he spent about 15 months serving in the United Nations Forces. During his stay there, our weekly trips to Dimsdale for the mail often proved eventful. There was usually a letter every two weeks from Korea and sometimes wooden boxes with Japanese writing on them would arrive. This caused a little interest at the store if other neighbors were there collecting mail and groceries. Roland returned to Canada in the summer of 1954.

During the next few years our family continued to grow. We acquired five more grandchildren. Another daughter and a son were born to Suzanne and Bill (Barbara and Randy). Yvonne and Walter had another son and two daughters (Bruce, Margaret, and Monica).

In 1963 our third daughter, Paulette, married Colin Hrychiw from the Lake Saskatoon district. They made their home in Grande Prairie.

On July 26, 1964, my husband Andrew died after spending several years in hospital in very poor health. For the next 11 years I continued to live on our farm with my two sons, Roland and Paul. During those years my family continued to grow, marry, and acquire new jobs or homes.

In the winter of 1965 our eldest son, Roland, married Elizabeth Hammer, a teacher, originally from Vulcan, Alberta. They made their home in Grande Prairie where their son, Kurtis, was born in 1966.

Meanwhile, Paulette and Colin had four daughters. Their names are Colleen (1964), twins, Karen and Glenda (1965), and Lynette (1971).

In the fall of 1975 I moved to town and lived with my son, Paul, for four years. In 1979 I moved into the James Manor Apartments where I am now enjoying my retirement. I am involved with the Senior Citizen's Center and making many new friends as well as enjoying the old ones.

I am now a great grandmother six times. My first grandson, Douglas MacAlister, has two sons, Michael and Monty. My second granddaughter, Barbara Kuntsi, (Carll) has three daughters, Tamara and twins, Brenda and Sara. My third granddaughter, Margaret Cissell (MacAlister) has one daughter, Lyndal.

The George Harry Watson Family

by Mrs. Nellie Gerow

George Watson, known as "What-I-did" to many of his friends and neighbors was born July 21, 1900 in Moosomin, Saskatchewan. At the age of 16 George and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Watson, came to the Peace River district on the first train to Grande Prairie. He worked at various jobs for several years.

He met Isabel George while she was keeping house for her uncle, Peter George. On October 10, 1928 they were married and lived on the Billy Salmond place which George farmed. George Watson had a great affection for horses. While living there they had two daughters, Nellie and Shirley. In the fall of 1931 they lost their home in a fire. They lived for a short time in his father's yard.



The George Watson family, May 1976. L. to R. Sharon, Fay, Bernice, Shirley, Nellie, George, Isabel, Christina and Georgina.

In the spring of 1932 they took a homestead in the Millarston district. George worked at Cooke's sawmill and for several different farmers. The next move for the Watson family was to the Flying Shot district where two more daughters, Christine and Bernice, were born. George farmed in the summer and hauled coal in the winter. Georgina was born in 1939 after they had returned to his homestead.

When the war began they moved to Pipestone Creek where George ran the farm for A.K. Watts. Later they moved to Vic Elford's and while they lived there daughter Fay was born. During the summer of 1943 George cooked for the fire-fighters across the Wapiti.

In 1946 their last daughter, Sharon, was born. They moved to Grande Prairie in 1949 and George worked as nightwatchman at Hystad's mill in Dimsdale. He worked for Borstad's from 1950 to 1959 when he and Isabel went into business for themselves. They operated the cafe at the Airport Motel for approximately three years and then moved their business to the Norwood Esso Coffee Shop. In 1966 they sold out and went to work cooking for the oil rigs until George's health failed. They lived in Grande Prairie until he passed away November 14, 1976. Isabel moved to Cranbrook, B.C. in the summer of 1977.

George and Isabel have twenty-one grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.



George Ahern and Duncan Bain.



Alex Beaulieu Family, 1962.
Lillian, Alex, Mary and Richard.

In the Millarston district other early settlers were: Cyrille Pidgeon on SW 19-70-7-W6, John McLean on SE 18-70-7-W6, George Ahern on SW 17-70-7-W6, Leo J. Myers family on SE 28-70-7-W6, John Van Hemert family on NE 20-70-7-W6, Mr. and Mrs. John Beaulieu and family on NW 26-70-7-W6 and the John Cahoon family on NW 32-70-7-W6.



Boyd Cooke, Mrs. Bain, Helen Bain, Tom Gerow, Florence George, Fred Gabler, Clarence Gabler, (1935).



Some Millarston ladies and children including Mrs. Mitchell, Mrs. Hawkes, Mrs. Bain, Mrs. Sutherland, Mrs. MacAlister, Mrs. Brumpton, Mrs. Frederickson, Mary Brumpton, Betty Brumpton and others.



Picnic at the Wapiti - Duncan Bain, Vivian Murray, Duncan Bain, Sr., Jean Murray, George Bain, Cyril Gabler, Mrs. Bain, Fred Gabler, Florence George (1935).

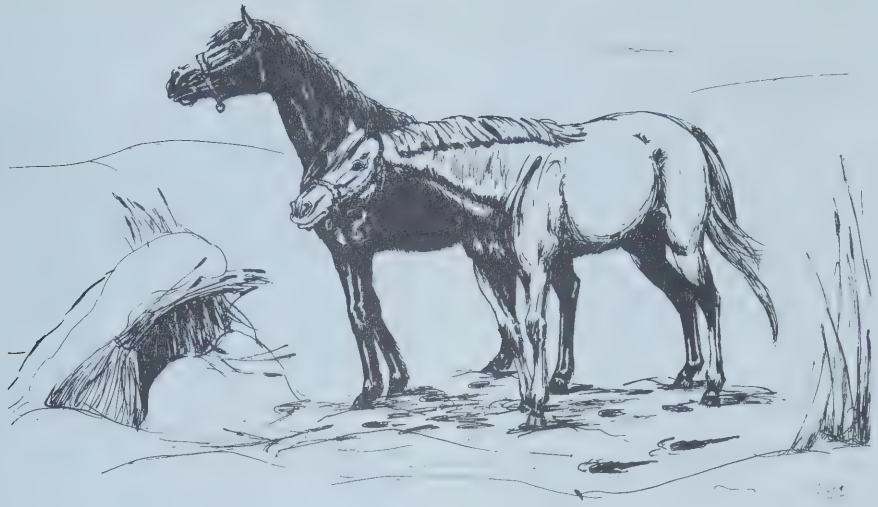


Millarston Ball Team, 1946.
Back row, L. to R.: Alfred MacAuley, Don MacAlister, Walter MacAlister, Gordon McCullough, Frank Stoll, Don Noyes, Iain MacAlister.
Front row, L. to R.: Thomas Cahoon, Russell Elford and Slim Sterr.



Millarston Ball Team:
Back: Frank Anderson, Seath Sutherland, Iain MacAlister, Lewis Hawkes, Clarence Johnson.
Front: Bill Mitchell, Ray Campbell, Billy Robertson, Tom Mitchell.

Chapter 10: Pipestone Creek



History of Pipestone Creek

Pipestone Creek is a small community in the northeast part of township 70, range 8, west of the 6th meridian, comprising about 13 sections of land. It was not one of the earliest districts settled, as it lies along the Pipestone Creek and the Wapiti River, and was a densely wooded area before settlement.

In 1909, Frank "Lacombe" Johnston chose land along the Pipestone Creek and had George Garnet of Spirit River build him a cabin, barn and storehouse. Johnston moved his family up from Lacombe, arriving at the site in February, 1910. However, his sons persuaded him that the more open land to the northeast was better, so they left the Pipestone district. In 1911, William (Wapiti Bill) Hosker came on the scene, and by 1915 had filed on the SW 23 and built a house and barn there.

It was in 1915, too, that Ed VanHorne, son-in-law of Lacombe Johnston, moved down to the Wapiti near the mouth of the Pipestone Creek and set up a sawmill. This provided work and lumber for people in all the Grande Prairie area and also opened up the Pipestone district a little by making the trail more travelled. This mill was in operation about four years. The VanHornes also ran a few thousand head of sheep along the Wapiti at that time.



Carol Carrolls driving the oxen at VanHorne's Sawmill.

Mrs. Hosker and sons, Art and Harold, joined Wapiti Bill in the spring of 1916. A few more settlers filed on homesteads that year, too, such as George Rozek (NW 34) and Ollie C. Williams (SW 34).

In the next four years, Flavius Brooks (SW 35), Chester VanSchaick (NW 35), Joe Jensen (NE 34), George Nelson (SE 34), A.L. Osborne (SW 33) and Jean LaPlace (NW 25 and NE 26) took up land in this beautiful, wooded district along the Wapiti. There were a number of others who filed on land but cancelled their claims later.

In the second decade of the 20th century, Pipestone Creek was nearly fully settled with the addition of these homesteaders: Edgar Jebb (SW 13) and Harold Hosker (NE 22) in August, 1920; Arthur Hosker (SE 27) in July 1921; Ed Wood (SE 13) in May, 1921 (cancelled and re-filed in 1928); Alan K. Watts (E½ 14) in October, 1922; Maude Cave-Browne (NW 14) in May, 1924; William Schmidt (SW 26) in November, 1926; Paul Schmidt (NW 23) in March, 1927 and Joseph Grabit (NW 24) in December, 1928.

With the land nearly all taken, the district's main industry was, of course, farming. The grey-wooded soil was best suited to grasses and legumes, and so most people invested in mixed farming ventures, with cattle, hogs, horses and sheep all being concerns at one time or another. Each farmyard had its flock of chickens and other fowl, as well. Grain was not to be ignored, however. Though the soil was not the best, J.B. LaPlace proved that good grain could be grown here, when he won second prize with his Reward wheat at the World Exhibition in Regina in 1933.

Harvesting was perhaps a little later in this wooded area, and in the days of the threshing machine, it often meant a long wait before the grain was in the bin. Wapiti

Bill Hosker and sons owned the threshing outfit in the community in the early days, but others, such as Iain MacAlister from nearby Millarston, took over some of the harvesting later on, before individual combines became widely used.

Even as early as 1936, efforts were being made to improve the calibre of livestock in the district. The local newspaper reported in March of 1936 that "Bert Osborne arrived home with a yearling stallion weighing 1250 pounds, purchased from a well-known Percheron breeder in Manitoba. The colt, a grandson of the champion 'Monarch', winner at the Toronto Royal, is unquestionably one of the most promising to be shipped into the Peace River country." Later, the district had the services of government supplied pure bred bulls which were stationed at the farm of A.K. Watts.

Besides farming, the Pipestone Creek district had a finger in the lumbering business, too. The first mill in the area was the already mentioned VanHorne mill. In the 1930's, the Hosker family operated a mill on the Pipestone Creek just below their home, then along the Wapiti and later in Harold's yard. In 1936, Bill Moss and Gordon Moore set up a mill on the south shore of the river, which ran about one season.

Perhaps Pipestone Creek was known most widely as the home of two guides and outfitters, A.L. Osborne and Carl Brooks. Each with his own business attracted hunters from the United States and Europe, and gave employment to many local people, especially the Indians of the area who were adept at wilderness living.

One of the most famous trips made by Bert Osborne occurred in 1936 when he guided Count Ignatieff and 11 boys from Upper Canada College through the foothills to Mount Robson. Bert was assisted by Adam Kenny, Ray Campbell, Allan Gerow and others. They used 18 saddle horses and 14 pack horses and the trip took about 20 days. An account of this trip was published in the Canadian Geographical Journal in November, 1936.

Carl Brooks and his pack outfit were instrumental in blazing the trail through the Monkman Pass, and also played an important part in the war effort by packing supplies for the Alasky Highway surveyors.

Another business that helped to keep the community humming was the Pipestone Creek Store and Post Office run by Alan and Sela Watts in the southwest corner of the district. From this center, the Wattses traded with Indians and other trappers for furs and hides, and supplied local settlers with groceries and mail service. Alan used his pen and persuasion to get new roads and improvements, and endeavored to attract as much attention to the area as possible.



The second Pipestone Creek Store built about 1938.

A ferry was installed to cross the Wapiti near the mouth of the Pipestone Creek in 1930. C.A. Williams was the first ferryman, followed by Len Gibbons, Robert Shaw and Bill Henderson, to name the earliest ones. This ferry facilitated access between South Wapiti and Wembley, making an impact on Pipestone Creek with the increased traffic over its roads.



Crew putting the ferry back in the river. Ray Osborne, Jack McCullough, ? ?, Bill Henderson, Bert Osborne and Sarah Hubert.

Pipestone Creek had its "First Annual Sports" in August, 1934. The Northern Tribune reported, "The stampede put on by Bert Osborne on his flat at the Wapiti drew a huge crowd of people from all across the district. Bert went to a great deal of trouble in his initial preparation - building corrals and chutes, preparations of the grounds, etc. The day started very promisingly re weather but became overcase in the afternoon and rain poured down about five, so most of the crowd left. The dance in the evening in A.K. Watts' barn had a big crowd but was also dampened by rain. Jack Penson's orchestra left Grande Prairie at 9 p.m. but didn't arrive at the dance until 12:05. They played until 5 a.m.

Despite the weather, apparently steer riding and bronco bucking contests were held at the stampede, as well as contest of swimming the river, by both horses and men. Though billed as the "First Annual" it turned out to be the only Pipestone Creek stampede.

The Pipestone Creek School served to educate the district children from 1938 to 1957 with two different buildings and in two different locations within the district. Church services were held in the school in the early years by Anglican ministers, and in the late 1940's a small church was moved near the store from Wembley, known as St. Matthews. It was in use here about ten years.

During the summer of 1939, a provincial Mobile Health Clinic came to the district. A team of doctors, nurses and dentists examined children for medical and dental ailments. Minor surgery was performed and teeth extracted and filled. This clinic was held in the yard at the store, using the Pipestone Creek Schoolhouse, which was



The Pipestone Creek School moved to Watts' yard for the Health Clinic.

moved to the site for the occasion, along with bunkhouses and tents. Fortunately the weather was pleasant, allowing people to wait outdoors and recuperate under shade trees in some cases. People attended from a radius of about ten miles, camping out overnight for this two-day, free clinic.

The main attraction of the community which remains to this day is the Pipestone Creek park. This was not developed as such until the 1950's by the Wembley Chamber of Commerce, though the spot was long used by local people for picnics, etc. The Indians used the area for many years before that as a camping spot when they came out to sell their furs and get their treaty money. An Indian grave yard was established beside the park many years ago and has been kept up by the County. In connection with the park there is a short nature hike which was established also by the County in the 1970's and attractively marked by wooden woodland creatures made by Frank Stoll.

Great interest was stirred in the Pipestone district among the archeologically minded when the imprint of a dinosaur's foot was discovered on a rock on the banks of the Wapiti near the creek mouth. Some years later, fossiles were discovered in the creek as well.

The district was never overrun with organizations, but did have a Ladies Club which served the school and community for many years. The members organized card parties, plays, school picnics and showers for brides.



Ladies club, including Molly Hosker, Hilda Bisgrove, Marjorie Schmidt, Crystal McCullough, Jean Woods, Irene Stoll and Agnes Brooks.

The other club of note was the Pipestone Creek Mutual Telephone Association which was active from 1958 to 1972. Presidents for this organization were Harry Hodgson and Frank Stoll. Secretaries were Frank Stoll, Sela Watts and Gladys Hodgson. Telephone service became a reality in 1958 and had been preceded by rural electrification in 1956.

There was a branch of the Canadian Legion formed in Pipestone Creek after World War II, but due to most of the members having to go elsewhere to work, the branch was never very active and finally disbanded. Its brief life of activity was centered in the Pipestone Creek Hall which A.K. Watts had built near the store.

Besides the 23 families whose biographies appear in this chapter, there were other people who lived in the district at one time or another whose stories do not appear anywhere in this book, and we make brief mention of them here.

MARSHALL CHENOWETH came to the area from Fort Vermillion, though was originally from the United States. He worked for farmers in the area and did some trapping. He lived in Vic Elford's old house at one time, and later in Joe Grabit's abandoned cabin, and finally in the school teacherage. He married Josephine St. Arnault and they had four children. The oldest two, Linda and Roy, started school at Pipestone Creek. The family later moved to Wembley and then to Grande Prairie.

WILLIAM FREEBORN, with his little daughter, Agnes, his mother-in-law, Mrs. Coffee, and brother, Jack, homesteaded the SE 33. He sold the quarter to Kents and he and his family moved to the United States, about 1919.

ALLAN GEROW was well-known in the district, principally during the years he worked the farm for A.K. Watts in the 50's and 60's. He and his wife Florence had five children, Gloria, Bert, Pat, Donna and Lyn. The four oldest all went to school at Pipestone Creek, and Flo was an active member of the Ladies Club. The Gerows moved to Fort St. John when Mrs. Watts sold the farm and closed the store in 1963. Allan passed away in 1972, and Flo still lives and works in Fort St. John. Most of the family live near her. All are married and have children.

JOSEPH ALPHONSE GRABIT filed on the NW 24 in 1928. He was a Frenchman and worked quite a bit for his neighbor, J.B. LaPlace. He was a bachelor and did not live in the district many years.

JOSEPH W JENSEN filed on the NE 34 in 1917. He and his wife, Ollie, and sons, Carlon and Lavier, lived there until the mid 30's when R. Currie bought the quarter. Carlon had the SW 25 in the Pipestone district and Lavier had land just north in the Wembley area.

HOWARD JEWITT acquired the S½ 34, which had been homesteaded by O.C. Williams and George Nelson earlier. He came from Saskatchewan about 1930. He sold the land to the Stolls in the mid 30's.

HARRY KENT had three quarters in the district, W½ 27 and SE 33. He and his parents and brother and sisters lived on the latter land for a few years. They had a lot of cattle and horses which they wintered along the Pipestone Creek on land that later belonged to Skillens. Harry's father was a "Rawleigh man". Harry was a World War I veteran and obtained two quarters of his land through the Soldier's Settlement Board. The land went back to the S.S.B. when Kents left in the early 20's.

PAUL KIRSCHT owned the NE 33. He was married and had three children, Elsie, Elford and Martha, who attended the Pipestone Creek School for a time. Paul later moved to Wembley.

FRANK MARTH and his wife, Minnie, bought the original Jensen homestead, where they lived with their four sons, Heinz, Werner, Curtis and Norman. They moved to Wembley for a few years, where Frank died. Now, Mrs. Marth and Norman, as well ad Curtis and his family, live on the land once more.

VICTOR METITUK and his wife, Lois, and family lived on the SW 33 for many years. Vic still lives there with his son, Murray, and wife and children. Lois lives in Grande Prairie.

GEORGE NELSON filed on the SE 34 in July, 1918. He was a bachelor who came to Canada about 1917 from the United States. He was murdered in May, 1923.

GEORGE ROZEK filed on NW 34 in March, 1916, and lived there till his death in the 60's. He was a bachelor and came from the United States.

ROBERT SHAW was the ferryman on the Wapiti ferry after its first operator died. Bob had a heart attack and died in June, 1933, as he was taking the ferry across the river with some passengers on board.

OLLIE CHRISTIE WILLIAMS filed on the SW 34 in July, 1916. He and his wife lived there, though he was often away trapping or working in a sawmill. He was known to be a bootlegger. In May, 1923, he murdered George Nelson, and disappeared across the Wapiti the following day, never to be heard of again in this district, nor was he ever found by the police. His wife went to the States, and married again in 1927.

Motive for the murder was Williams' suspicion that Nelson had been fooling around with Mrs. Williams while he (Williams) was at a mill in B.C. over the winter. Both Mrs. Williams and Nelson denied the charge but Williams was not appeased.

The actual story of the crime as told to the Grande Prairie Herald reporter by J.W. Jensen is as follows:

George Nelson and I were cutting a line through the brush before building a fence. It was quite hot, so we were taking a little rest in the shade. Nelson had just been telling me about how queer Williams had been acting toward him since he got back, and how he had borrowed Nelson's shot gun and come to his shack and kept pointing the gun towards him and fooling with the hammer. Nelson warned him not to point the gun towards him, that it might accidentally go off. Williams didn't pay any attention to him, so Nelson left the shack.

This was two days before the murder and Nelson said to me, "I believe that damn Williams is going to get me."

I just laughed at him and said, "I don't believe Williams has the nerve to shoot anyone." We started to work again and in a few minutes we saw Williams approaching from the west.

On coming up to us, he said, "What the hell are you fellows doing here?

"Can't you see we are cutting brush?" Nelson answered banteringly.

Williams said, "Say, Nelson, I want you," and they started walking away from where I was standing. Williams was walking a step or so behind Nelson and after they had gone a few steps, I saw him draw his revolver from his pocket and point it toward Nelson's ribs.

Nelson apparently didn't know Williams had drawn the guns and I heard him say, "If you have anything to settle, we might as well settle it right here. There is no use walking any further."

"Williams answered sharply, "Step up, there, and step fast, or I'll kill you."

Nelson stopped then and turned around, saying, "Well, now, Ol, if you are going to shoot, shoot quick."

They stood facing each other for what I would say was fully a minute and finally Williams said, "I am going to kill you," and swore vehemently.

"Well," Nelson said, "go ahead if you are going to, Ol." With that Williams raised the automatic with both hands and fired. Nelson dropped instantly and never moved. Williams stepped over the body and quickly started west.

I thought he was going to beat it, but he turned and walked back to me, pointed the gun at me and swore. He said, "You saw me shoot Goerge and I have a notion to shoot you, so you won't tell the police."

I was pretty excited and thought he really would, but I said, "Oh, now don't tear your shirt."

By this time, Williams, who is usually very red in the face, had turned a sickly green and was evidently beginning to realize what he had done. Finally, after a short while of bluffing and bartering, he said, "I know you have to report this, but tell the police you and George were working and you had your back to him. You heard a shot from the north and when you turned around, George was dead."

I promised to do this and he started home. As soon as he had disappeared, I went over to where Nelson was lying, thinking possibly he wasn't dead, but he surely was. He had fallen on his face, and had his hands in his pockets and his pipe in his mouth.

This event nearly caused the creek to be renamed Murder Creek. One settler even went so far as to call his homestead Murder Creek Ranch for a time. However, the creek had clay along its banks which the Indians were reported to have used for making pipes, so "Pipestone Creek" held out. It was fitting that George Nelson died with "his pipe in his mouth."

Pipestone Creek School District #4793

The Northern Tribune reported on July 6, 1933, that a meeting was held at the Pipestone Creek store concerning a school along the Pipestone Creek. A committee consisting of Mrs. William Hosker, Mr. Marian Sanders and Mr. Harry Johnston was appointed to look into matters pertaining to forming a district. No positive action resulted at the time and children of the committee members began their school days at either Millarston or Aspen Ridge, or by correspondence at home.

Early in 1936, at a meeting of the Millarston School district which at that time included the Pipestone area, A.K. Watts raised the question of forming a new district along the Pipestone, and Ed Wood suggested having a van for the students of the west end of the district. Neither idea was acted upon then, but a year later, A.K. Watts wrote the school superintendent asking what steps should be taken to have the Pipestone Creek area relinquished from the Millarston School district.

On September 18, 1937, the first meeting of the Pipestone Creek School District #4793 was held at Pipestone Creek. The meeting opened with A.K. Watts in the chair and Mrs. Gladys Hodgson as secretary. A vote was taken and all 14 district residents present voted in favor of establishing the school district. Trustees elected were William Hosker, Mrs. Sela Watts and Harry Hodgson. Threee locations were suggested, SE 26, NE22 and NW 23, all in township 70, range 8. A vote again was taken, with NE 22 being most heavily favored. On October 20, 1937, the Department of Education approved the site for the Pipestone Creek school as three acres on the northeast corner of NE 22-70-8-W6.

The first trustee's meeting saw Harry Hodgson elected as chairman as chairman and Sela Watts as secretary. At the next meeting, (November 24, 1937) a timber permit was filled in for 3000 feet of building logs. It was also decided to get lumber and fence posts to complete the school, a barn, a teacherage and yard, the school to be approximately 36 by 24 feet. Mrs. Hosker signed the release form for three acres of NE 22 for the school site.



Pipestone Creek School, 1938.
Back row: Kathleen Ross, teacher, Ralph Hosker, John Whyte.
Middle row: Nancy Wood, Pat Watts, Agnes Whyte, Verna Elford, Billi Watts.
Front row: Finley Elford, Victor Elford, Richard Brooks, Victor Johns, Cecil Brooks.

For some reason or other this building did not get built, but during the summer of 1938 A.K. Watts had a small log building erected on his property a quarter of mile north of the store, which he rented to the school division for use as a school at $5 a month. It opened as the Pipestone Creek School in August, 1938, with Miss Cathy Ross as teacher. Children listed on the August register included Finlay, Victor, Russell and Verna Elford; Alvin and Ralph Hosker; Richard Brooks, Beverly and Richard Thornton, Nancy Wood, Joan and Pat Watts, John and Agnes Whyte, and Ray Osborne. By the end of the 1938-39 term, Cecil Brooks had joined the gang and those who had moved away were Alvin Hosker and the Thornton children.

In July, 1939, the trustees petitioned the school division for the school site to be changed from NE22 to the southwest corner of SE 23 because all but two of the students attending the school lived in the south end of the district.

In February, 1939, the Divisional Board offered A.K. Watts $185 for the school building. Meanwhile, residents on the northern end of the district were agitating to have a school house built on the land originally chosen (NE 22) and also a barn. In June, 1940, the Department of Education gave the Grande Prairie School Division permission to purchase the building from Watts, having inspected it and finding it suitable to be used as a temporary school for one year. As it turned out, this building was used as the Pipestone Creek School until 1944, situated on the south-west corner of SE 23-70-8-W6 and later moved to NE 22.

During those years the teachers (following Miss Ross) were Miss Hilda Bland (1939-40), Mrs. Maud Reinhart (1940-41), Miss Olga Helen Lacusta who became Mrs. Hartley while there (1941-43), and Miss Belle Wallace for the 1943-44 term. All these teachers boarded in a small log cabin, affectionately known as Ross Cottage after the first teacher, located at the Pipestone Creek store.

In the summer of 1944, due to the war shortage of teachers and the small attendance at Pipestone Creek, it was decided to van the students to Millarston School. Mr. David Whyte was chosen to be the driver of the horse drawn van and received $3 a day for himself, the team and the rig. He had a 14 mile route (round trip). His rig was a canvas covered wagon or sleigh drawn by his faithful team of greys. Later he purchased a car and used that. Mr. Cavett was the teacher at the Millarston school followed by Miss Eileen Murray, during Pipestone Creek students sojourn there.



David Whyte, Sr. and his team with the Pipestone Creek school van.

In the summer of 1946, a meeting was held at the Pipestone Creek Hall to discuss transportation of the children from the north end of the district to Millarston, as there were six children needing this service. Residents were beginning to feel that Pipestone Creek should have a school of its own once more, and that it should be further north as there were a dozen pre-schoolers in the north end of the district who would be ready for grade one within three years. Another meeting was held in June, 1947 with Mr. D.M. Noyes, (councillor), Mr. Stan Hambly (superintendent) and Mr. McCune (sec.-treas. school div.) in attendance. The district residents moved to have a resolution sent to the divisional board that a new school be built for the district.

No such luck for Pipestone Creek! Finally in the fall of 1948 Grande Prairie School Division decided to move the old building (which had been allotted one more year of school life in 1940) to the NE 22-70-8W6 and open it as a school once more. Mrs. Ingibjorg Olsson was teacher for two years, followed by Miss Sonja Stamp. For the 1951-52 term, Miss June Dowling and Miss Pearl Lester were supervisors there.



Pipestone Creek School, June 1950.
Some of these pupils are: Jim and Ken Hodgson; Bob Robertson; Bert, Gloria, Pat and Donna Gerow; Ethel, Theresa, Maureen, George and Gerald Schmidt, and Joan Stoll.

In September 1952, a school house was moved down to Pipestone from Buffalo Lakes, and the old log building was relegated to the status of teacherage.

Miss Gladys Omlid was the teacher in this "new" school followed by Mrs. Florence Russell for two terms.

During Mrs. Russell's stint there, rural electrification came to the district, (1954) and Cookshaw Electric had the contract of wiring the school.

September, 1955, saw a large student body of 30, with Mrs. Clara Knutson as teacher. She continued teaching there until June of 1957 when the school was finally closed and the students bussed to Wembley via county bus, driven by Arvid Olsson.

The School building was left on the site for some years and used as a community hall. Eventually it was sold to J. Wagar. The teacherage (old log school) was rented out for a few years but finally became unfit for use. The land now belongs to Wilfred Hanson and is a field.

Students attending the school besides those mentioned in the first years included: Elizabeth, Ken, Gordon, Margaret and Dorothy Bisgrove; Michael and Terence Bain; Linda Chenoweth; Margaret Dean; Anna and Eva Elford; Gloria, Albert, Patricia, Donna and Rodney Gerow; Gerald, James and Kenneth Hodgson; Donald and Lawrence Hosker; Leonard, Henry, Gloria, Bertha, Mary and William Hearns; Victor Johns; Elsie, Martha and Elford Kirscht; Dale Knutson; Norman Marth; Richard, Ellen and Paul Moors; Lawrence MacAlister; Yvonne, Laverne, Ralph and Barbara McCullough; Lisa Olsson; Ken and Fern Penny; Yvonne Pivert; Robert and Marie Robertson; Eva and Roddy Russell; Ethel, Theresa, George, Maureen and Gerald Schmidt; Joan and Gordon Stoll; Fred, Jimmy and Norman Savard; Irene, Patricia and Douglas VanSchaick; Nellie, Shirley, Christina and Bernice Watson; Edna Wood; Lois Wagar. (Listed alphabetically by Family name, not by years attending.)

The Arac Family

by Dorothy Arac

Danny Arac was born in North Sydney, Nova Scotia. He came west as a young boy, with his family. They settled on a farm in the North Kleskun district.

During the war Danny saw action overseas, with the Fort Garry Horse Tank Corps. After the war, Danny returned to the North Kleskun district where he farmed until 1972.

Dorothy was born and raised in the Sexsmith area, the daughter of Jennie and Hiram McQuitty. She attended both North Sexsmith and Sexsmith schools, then took her nurses training at the Miscericordia Hospital in Edmonton.

Danny and Dorothy were married in 1957. They lived in Sexsmith and continued to farm land in the North Kleskun district. During this time three children were born to them - Barbara, Brent and Brenda.

In 1972, the Aracs purchased the Otto Schadeck farm south of Wembley, where they lived for two years. They sold the farm in 1974 and moved to Grande Prairie.

The Ronald Bisgrove Family

Ronald Bisgrove was born near Glastonbury in Somerset, England, to Frank and Alice Bisgrove, on March 2, 1904. He farmed with his parents, making cider to sell to the pubs, milking dairy cows, and helping his mother make cheese. Ronnie remembers how well he liked the curd from his mother's cheese, and one day, while reaching into the vat for a taste, he fell in!

In 1924, Ronnie and his brother, Wilf, came to Canada. They worked first for Sir Arthur Currie's brother on a cattle ranch at Strathray, Ontario, later at Moosejaw, and eventually came north in 1927 with C.A. "Dad" Williams. Ronnie worked at the Buffalo Lake Sawmill during his first winter in the Peace. The following summer he looked for a homestead near Ft. St. John, finally choosing one at Rolla, B.C. He also worked about that time for Jimmy Oliver and Joe Boyle.

Deciding finally to settle in the Pipestone Creek area, Ronnie bought a half section in partnership with Billy Bean, and then bought Bean's share in 1933. His start in farming was not an encouraging one by any means. He worked the winter of 1933-34 for lumber instead for wages, only to have it all wash down the river during the break-up in April. The crop that he planted that summer was totally lost to early snow and frost. It was necessary to work at other jobs, so Ronnie worked in Schneider and Loskill's Coal Mine along the Wapiti, taking a stint at hauling coal, too. For a number of years he batched with Bill Loskill on his place. Later Ronnie leased the mine that H. Campbell had, but found it not too profitable a venture.

While Ronnie was mining for Schneider and Loskill, he had the very sad happening of finding the Schneider's five year old son, Edwin, drowned in a well. It was a shallow, hand-dug well that had not yet been covered over, and the little boy had ventured too near.

While Ronnie was working out winters, he was also trying to built up his farm. He rented a half section from J.B. LaPlace, and then when that was sold to Jack Penny, Ronnie bought the Jensen place south of it, later also buying the Joe Grabbit place to the south of that.

In the meantime, a young woman was growing up along the Pipestone Creek and her name was Hilda Hosker. Her parents and two older brothers had come from England before the twenties, and Hilda was born on their homestead on the banks of the Pipestone Creek in 1920, followed by brother Ralph in 1925. Hilda took most of her schooling at Millarston, riding the long five miles by horseback, and later she stayed with the Hennig family and took some more education at St. John's School near Wembley.

In 1938, Hilda and Ronnie were married, and they set up their home on the LaPlace place that Ronnie was renting at the time. A few years later they bought the SW 25-70-8-W6 and built a new house on it. Always happiest working outdoors, with horses and stock, Hilda found no reason to stop doing so just because she had a home to keep as well. She and Ronnie worked side by side, building their farm into a paying operation.



Ronnie and Betty Bisgrove, cutting oats in 1942.

Before long, there were little people added to their household, who quickly grew and began to help with the many duties, too. First, came Betty, then Kenneth, and Gordon, followed by two more girls, Margaret and Dorothy. They took their early schooling at Millarston and Pipestone Creek, joining the ranks of the Wembley school when the Pipestone students were bussed there.



The Bisgrove family ready for church.
Back: Ronnie, Hilda, Ken and Betty.
Front: Dorothy, Margaret and Gordie.

After high school, Betty began working at the Grande Prairie Cleaners then switched over to A.G.T. where she has remained for 14 years.

Ken worked for Canadian Utilities. He married Jean Kiellar and they had two children, Darrel and Sandy. Jean was killed in a highway accident in December 1968, and Ken was killed in an electrical accident on May 27, 1969. Darrel and Sandy went to live with their grandparents, Ronnie and Hilda, where they are now going to high school.

Gordon is a Forest Protection Officer, now working at Footner Lake, Alberta. He is married to Marge Dillman, and they have three children, Dwayne, Kenny and Kim.

Margaret married an engineer, Len Strynadka, who works for J.R. Payne Associates. They live at Landry Heights in the Grovedale area, and have two children, Shauna and Brent.

Dorothy is an optometry technician and lives in Kelowna, B.C.

Ronnie and Hilda sold their farm to Mike Strutz in 1962 and moved to Grande Prairie. They bought a house south of the Pioneer Lodge, where they still live. The first years in town they worked at various jobs, but are now retired. Hilda has made a name for herself over the years in curling circles.

The Carl Brooks Family

by Agnes Campbell

Carl was born in Huntsville, Washington, on March 24, 1901, eldest of the Flavius Brooks family. He had three sisters, Marie, Ethelyn, and Chrystal. A twin brother died in 1903. Carl arrived in Grande Prairie in the spring of 1917 with his father, Flavius, mother Henrietta and family. His father taught school for 21 years in the States but because of health reasons went farming. They first lived on leased land in the Percy school district, then moved to a homestead near Pipestone Creek. Carl's quarter was NW 26-70-8-W6. He farmed with his father and later, also worked in Oxley's store in Wembley.

In April, 1930, he was married in Wembley United Church to me, Agnes Jane Watson, youngest daughter of John and Jane Watson of Wembley. I was born September 14, 1906, in County Down Ireland. My family came to Canada in 1908 and first settled in Edmonton, then came to Wembley, July 1, 1916. Carl had a log house built and furnished on the farm at Pipestone Creek. It was comfortable. Then the depression hit. Money was scarce.

In February, 1931, the Wembley RCMP formed a posse to hunt for a man (Lester Campbell) who was lost in the bush across the Wapiti. Carl went and I stayed at my mother's to be near the doctor at Wembley. On February 12, our first son, Richard Carl Lincoln, was born, before his dad got home. It was a mild winter with no snow until after that time.

The next year Carl filed on a homestead NW 5-69-8-W6 in South Wapiti. There were a lot of settlers there then. We built a one room log house, barn and corrals there, and did some brushing. For entertainment there were concerts and dances in the homes. Vic Elford would play the mouth organ and Carl would chord on the mandolin. Carl recited "The Cremation of Sam McGee." The strawberries in summer were wonderful. I canned 50 quarts. There was a little path to the creek and when Richard started to run he always went there. One day his dad followed him and ducked him in the water. It scared him so that he didn't go back, which was a relief to me.

On December 5, 1932 we were living on the farm at Pipestone Creek. The snow drifts were piled high. Carl drove to Wembley with a team and sleigh to get the doctor, but before he got back our second son was born, Cecil Gilbert. The two Grandmothers were there and sitting by the heater waiting when Carl returned. Grandma Brooks was so glad Richard would have a brother. She got great pleasure from her first grandchildren. My mother stayed with us two or three weeks. Grandpa



The Brooks family in 1945. Cecil, Carl, Dennis, Stanley, Agnes and Richard.

Brooks had sheep and the girls carded wool that winter and we made some lovely quilts, not to mention all the sewing and knitting we did, and making new clothes from old ones. On the winter evenings Carl would play the mandolin and sing songs and we would make popcorn.

Carl was a separator man on my brother Findlay's threshing outfit. When he got his wages that fall he



Pack horses getting ready at Brooks' place to go on a hunting trip to the mountains.

bought a cabinet Marconi radio. This was a real luxury then. In the evening Carl's family would come over and every one would listen to the radio. Reception in the winter with a battery radio was perfect. We were able to pick up the family home town, Twin Falls, Idaho, and heard Carl's school friend and neighbor advertising his store on the radio. A letter was sent and greetings were sent back over the radio. The pleasure we got from it was well worth the money.

Our first school was at Pipestone Creek near the store and post office. I took Richard on horseback two and a half miles, and went back and got him after school.

The first teacher was Cathy Ross. Later the school closed and the boys had to ride five miles to Millarston on horseback. Claude Cavette was the teacher there.

The Anglican Sunday School van came in summer. I got Sunday School lessons and paper in the mail and the van ladies had a review of lessons in the summer.

During the '30s Carl had built up his pack outfit, making pack saddles, pack boxes, ropes, etc. I sewed tents, tarps, and canvas bags. He advertised in hunting magazines as a guide and outfitter, and received letters from all over the States. These hunting trips became more successful every year and brought money into the country and work for many people.

When the Monkman Pass Highway Association was formed, Carl with his horses and pack outfit went in 1937 with Ted Chambers, Alex Monkman, and Shorty McGinnis. They were the first to blaze the trail all the way through the Monkman Pass to Hansard near Prince George.

In 1939 Carl with his pack outfit was hired by a group headed by Alex Watt and Bruce Albright who had started a resort near Kinuso Falls. Carl would take tourists to Monkman Lake and through the Monkman Pass. The boys and I went with him and stayed at Kinuso Falls for the school holidays.

Another venture was packing on the Alaska Highway in 1942. Tommy Wilde of Fort St. John had a contract to pack supplies for the road surveyors. He hired Carl to get men and horses in our part of the country. This gave work to a lot of people.

Our next two sons were born in the Grande Prairie Hospital. Carl drove me in the car then. Dennis Watson was born December 9, 1940. Stanley Robert was born December 3, 1943. I was glad to have Mary Skillen come and keep house while I was away.

Some of Carl's hunters gave him a trip to the States in 1944. He made new contacts. That fall there were 14 hunters. A truck owned by Len Robertson was loaded with supplies, saddles, and hunters. The guides and horses had gone ahead to be there when the hunting parties got to the camp at Pinto Creek. To save time a plane was chartered to bring the hunters out from Porcupine (Kakwa) lake and take the next trip in. There were several successful trips.

On the last trip out in October, 1945, the plane left Lake Saskatoon on Friday. It was a clear day. We saw it going and we were making preparations for the hunting party to come home. It didn't come back. The weather was perfect and we waited Saturday and Sunday. A rescue plane would not go for three days. By that time the pilot, Cormack, and Indian Guide, Ed Stoney, had made the trip by saddle horse and gave the first information that the plane had crashed just after taking off from Porcupine Lake. The rescue plane finally got there and brought them out. I didn't hear until then that Carl had met his untimely death in the prime of life. It was a far cry from when the hunting trips usually came home in the fall with the ponies to find pumpkin pie and turkey dinners waiting at home.

Richard and I took hunting parties for a while and then sold the outfit and bought a house in Wembley in 1948. It was nice to be near high school for the older boys and Stanley was just starting school. I boarded the school principal and two other teachers, got involved in church and sunday school. It was good to be busy.

In 1952, Ray Campbell and I were married in Wembley. We moved to Grande Prairie in 1962 to be near Ray's work.

Richard graduated from Wembley High School and then worked in the Royal Bank in Grande Prairie and Sexsmith for two years. After that he started with Cascade Drilling Company at Leduc. He married a nurse, Zena Luciak. They followed the rigs in this country, then in 1966 Richard was hired by Consumer's Gas Company at Port Colborne, as manager of the Niagara District. Richard and Zena have four children. The oldest two girls are married, one is training for a nurse in Toronto, and David is at home and in high school.

Cecil took his high school at Wembley, and later married a teacher, Gladys Alexandra. They have five boys, the oldest is married. Cecil and Gladys live in Melville, Saskatchewan where he works for North American Lumber Company. He worked on the oil rigs until he had a health problem.

Dennis also took his high school at Wembley. He married Emma Miller of Fairview. They have no family. Dennis owns the Rosebrook Flooring and Modern Decor Center in Fort St. John, B.C. Emma is head girl in the B.C. Telephone office there.

Stanley graduated from high school in Grande Prairie. He married a nurse, Lou Wideman, of Castor, Alberta. They have two young boys. Stanley lived in Edmonton for 15 years and then joined Dennis at Fort St. John where they are in business together.

The Flavius Brooks Family

by Ethelyn Elford

In the spring of 1917, the Brooks family left Twin Falls, Idaho, and came to Grande Prairie. We had shipped horses, milk cows and furniture. We lived in Grande Prairie for a few weeks, then moved to Richmond Hill for the summer.

In the fall of 1917, the family moved onto the homestead as a log house had been built. It was located in the Pipestone Creek area.

The family included: Flavius Brooks, born in 1861 in Albany, Oregon; Henrietta Brooks, born in 1863 in Keosauqua, Iowa, their son, Carl, born in 1902 at Huntville, daughter Chrystal born in 1904 at Huntville and daughter Ethelyn born in 1909 at Twin Falls.



Ethelyn Brooks.

Accompanying the Brooks family were Mrs. J.W. Jensen, daughter of Henrietta by a former marriage, and her husband Joe, and his two sons Lavier and Carlon. They homesteaded on the quarter cornering the Brooks homestead.

Carl filed on the quarter south of Flavius' quarter. The Brooks' had retired at an early age and were not satisfied living in retirement. Flavius made a trip to the Peace River country in 1915-16 and liked it, so we moved into the country.

We found the way of life much different as we had lived in the city of Twin Falls. We liked the country and enjoyed the wildlife. There were a few people there, the Ollie Williams family, Freeborn brothers, Mrs. Coffee and granddaughter, Agnes, Wapiti Bill Hosker and family, and the Van Horne family. A fellow had built a cabin in some trees on our homestead. His name was Babington. Also, there was Al Johnson, who was called Cussing Johnson.

We cleared the land and cultivated with horses. We raised wheat and oats. We bought cattle and sheep. Not knowing the country, we had very bad luck and went through a lot of hardships. We had purchased the cattle at a high price and sold at a give-away price.

There were no churches in the community so the Brooks invited ministers to hold services in our home. Some of those ministers were the Revs. Younger, Paige, Pryor and Bellester. Then after awhile, services were held in other homes. I remember going to church service in Ollie Williams' home and also at Mrs. Coffee's home. Then finally services were held in the Hillhead school house to the northwest.

The first winter we didn't go to school except for Marie who stayed with a family on Richmond Hill and went to school there. The next fall Chrystal and Ethelyn started to Hillhead on horse back. Chrystal's horse acted up and she didn't want to go anymore, so she quit school. Ethelyn went when possible. If the weather was too cold she studied at home.

The only medical help was in Grande Prairie. Ethelyn fell from a horse dislocating an arm. We were forced to go to Grande Prairie which was 18 miles away to a doctor and a small hospital.

The Spanish Flu of 1918 was terrible. We were all very sick but we all survived. We were required to wear a handkerchief or cloth as a mask over nose and mouth when going anywhere. This was one of the worst experiences we went through as many died.

Mrs. Brooks sometimes went out on nursing when some families were expecting a baby. Some places were the Van Horne's, the Frank Roberts and Gillespie's.

We raised a big garden and stored or canned the produce. We picked wild fruit, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, saskatoons and chokecherries. We churned our own butter when we could and made cottage cheese.

One winter we didn't have any food stored as the gardens were a failure and there was no wild fruit. We could not buy potatoes or butter as there were none available. We ate navy beans in place of potatoes and peanut butter in place of butter. This was a very cold winter. We were forced to take the cattle to Bear Lake to get feed for them.

People were coming in all the time. Chester Van Schaick filed on the quarter north of the Brooks place. George Nelson filed just west. LaPlace to the east and south. The Kent family, Charles Kline, Dad Williams and A.K. Watts.

The Hillhead school children would put on a Christmas play. Emily Watson would help the children practise for it. Jim Smith would go to every home and collect money, then buy a toy or something for each child.

Later, the railroad was built and the town of Wembley begun. Before that we had to go to Lake Saskatoon for groceries. Then Alan Watts put in a store and post office at Pipestone Creek.

The South Wapiti District opened up as a grade was made on the south hill and a ferry was put in for crossing the river. Flavius, Carl, Marie, Chrystal and Ethelyn all homesteaded.

A log cabin was built on Carl's place and we lived there in the summer. We took cattle there for pasture. It was



Flavius and Henrietta Brooks.

one summer Carl and Foster Van Schaick were looking for cattle when a baby moose followed them. They were forced to climb a tree. They stayed for awhile but the old moose would not leave so they shot her. They brought the baby moose to Ethelyn and she fed it. When leaving for the summer, she crated it and hauled it out. It followed her all over on foot or horseback. It was kept till spring as it didn't like strangers. We had to kill it as we were afraid it would kill someone.

Carl was married to Agnes Watson. They had four sons, Richard, Cecil, Stanley and Dennis.

Marie was married to Foster Van Schaick. They had two daughters and one son, Irene, Patricia and Douglas. Marie passed away in June 1978 with leukemia.

Chrystal married Henry McCullough. She passed away with cancer.

Ethelyn married Edward Elford. They had three children, Edward, Rodney (Buddy) and Mardi. Edward passed away June 10, 1975. Ethelyn lives in Twin Bridges, Montana, having left Canada in 1937.

Henrietta Brooks passed away in 1934 with cancer. Flavius Brooks lived with Henry and Chrystal, spending some time at the sawmill at South Wapiti. Finally he went to live in the rest home in Grande Prairie. When he was 93 he broke his hip. They operated on him but he passed away.



Henrietta Brooks with grandchildren Richard, Cecil and Irene.

The Fred Hamm Family

by Else Moors

Fred Hamm came to the Goodfare district from Germany in 1928 and took up a homestead. His wife joined him a year later. They sold the homestead and bought a quarter of land south of Wembley on the north side of the correction line on the road to the Wapiti ferry, at the same time as Martin Moors, in the spring of 1938.

Hamms farmed there until 1954 when they moved to Grande Prairie. Martin Moors rented their land for some years, then it was sold to Eric Stamp.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamm had one son who went to work in B.C. in the early thirties. He died there soon after. In the forties, Hamms adopted Eddy Thacker who lived with them until he was grown up and went to work. Hamms travelled back and forth to Germany many times. They went to stay in Germany in 1973. Mrs. Hamm died there in May, 1977 and Fred died in April, 1978.



Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hamm and Martin Moors, 1944.

The Harry Hodgson Family

by Gladys Hodgson

On April 2, 1904, Harry was born in Cumberland, England, and immigrated with his parents to Canada when he was about three years of age. They spent a year or so in Ontario, then moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan where they lived for a few years before moving to Leask in the same province. There being no school near, Harry went to Shellbrook, where he stayed with Dr. French and went to Pleasantville school for two years. He then returned to Shellbrook and for four years worked for a farmer whose wife had been his teacher at Pleasantville school. He worked out in the bush winters.

Pleasantville was the school which I also attended. I was born in Prince Albert in 1906. When I was five my parents took up farming two miles west of Shellbrook.

In 1928, Harry and I married and rented a farm for one year. All available land in Saskatchewan had been taken years before, so, on hearing of the Peace River country,



Ken, Harry, Jim and Gerald Hodgson, July, 1957.

its good land and milder winters, we decided to make the move. We loaded our few possessions in a box car destined for Grande Prairie. All homesteads had been taken close to Grande Prairie so on looking around we found a quarter southwest of Dimsdale, SW 24-70-8-W6. We lived in a caboose owned by Bill Belfrey until we got a house built. The house was of hewed logs and consisted of three rooms and was heated with wood stoves. We were very comfortable. Water rarely ever froze in winter in it. For water we melted snow in winter and put up ice from the Wapiti River for use in summer and also for keeping cream, butter and such cool during summer.

Times were hard as the depression had hit. We lived mostly from what we grew on the farm. Cattle and pigs weren't worth shipping, so we had all the meat we needed, which we cured and canned. In summer, berries were very plentiful so we preserved strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and cranberries by canning or making jams and jellies. We had brought in a cow and calf so we had plenty of milk and butter. We were one of the few who did not go on relief.

Harry made a wood sawing outfit, and sawed wood and ground grain for neighbors for the cash we needed.

Our first land was cleared and broken with horses before we acquired a tractor in 1943. In 1944 we bought a quarter adjoining the homestead and also rented three quarters which had 100 acres broke. Later on, we bought one of these quarters.

Our nearest shopping centre was Wembley and it boasted several more businesses than it does now. Our first transportation was a covered buggy drawn by a bay gelding called Rowdy. He was a proud, handsome horse. We got our first car in 1942 and replaced it with a truck in 1948.

We were always willing to help in community affairs. Harry served as president of the community club, was chairman of the Pipestone Creek School Board, and president of the Pipestone Creek Mutual Telephone Company when the local people installed their own phone lines. He was also a committee member for Alberta Wheat Pool.

I served the community club as president and secretary-treasurer, and was secretary-treasurer of the telephone company in its last three years of operation before Alberta Government Telephones took over. I was also secretary-treasurer of the Wembley Curling Club for five years.

In 1954 a new house was built and the old log house was used as a barn, for lambing mostly. We had over 200 sheep at one time. Turkeys were also raised by the hundreds and the majority of them we sold to George Vagt of Vagt's Meat in Grande Prairie. He also bought his lamb from us.

In 1934 our family of three boys began arriving. Gerald, who married Muriel Warner, has three children, son Brent and daughters Susan and Alison.

James married Margaret Lowe. They have a son Robert and two daughters, Tanis and Joanne.

Kenneth married Glenda Barley and they have two daughters, Norma and Colleen.

In 1973, we sold the farm to William Thiessen and moved to Clairmont where we still reside. We spend our time in the garden, camping and fishing in summer, also bowling twice a week. My spare time is spent crocheting or knitting. Harry helps out on a farm near Clairmont during spring and fall work. We both enjoy fairly good health outside of having arthritis.



Hodgson's driving horse, Rowdy.



Harry and Gladys Hodgson, 1929.

The Harold Hosker Family

The "Fly-in Mechanic" was born in England in 1909. His name was Harold Hosker and he came to Canada with his mother and brother, Arthur, in 1916. His father, "Wapiti Bill", had come to the Peace River Country a few years earlier to get a homestead and set up a home. Harold is remembered by neighbors as a young fellow who was eager to learn, both by reading and by experience. He was quick to pick up the intricacies of engines as they came on the scene, and it soon became common knowledge that Harold could "fix anything".

As a young man, Harold farmed with his dad, and operated the family threshing machine. In the winter months, he ran his own sawmill at Pipestone Creek. He homesteaded the NE 22-70-8-W6, a quarter near his dad's that had a beautiful stand of spruce on it.

In 1934, Harold married Myrtle Weaver from Michigan, U.S.A. They were married in Lansing, Michigan, and Harold brought his bride north in 1935, during the bad flood that put the road and railroad under water along Slave Lake.

Harold joined the army in the fall of 1939. He became a sergeant in the Calgary Tanks. He was in the Dieppe raid, and then went into Italy. He remained in the forces until the war ended in 1945. After his discharge he worked in the blacksmith shop at Pipestone Creek for A.K. Watts. From there, he and his family moved to Eaglesham where he worked in a garage and blacksmith shop for Reuben Larson until 1953. By then, the "family" included Ann, Jack and Joy, too.

Harold and family moved back to Wembley and he started his own garage and blacksmith shop. In the late fifties he moved to Redwater and worked in a garage and welding shop. From there he got a job with the Department of Transport in Edmonton.

The D.O.T. moved the Hoskers to Fort Smith, and then to Fort Simpson in the Northwest Territories, to work at the airports there. In the early sixties, they bought a house in Edmonton and moved back from the north to live in the Capital. Harold was still working for D.O.T., being flown to all the northern airports whenever he was needed. It was at this time he became known as the "Fly-in Mechanic". He continued working for the D.O.T. until he retired in the late sixties. Retirement was spent in their comfortable home in Edmonton, where Harold passed away on July 22, 1978. Myrtle still lives in Edmonton.

Their oldest daughter, Ann, is a nurse and lives with her husband, Mervin Mattern, in Flin Flon, Manitoba. They have two girls and a boy.

Harold and Myrtle's son, Jack, has an autobody shop in Calgary, where he and his wife, Shirley, live. They have four boys and a girl. Jack was in the Armed Forces, stationed in Germany, for sometime prior to going into the autobody business.

The Hosker's youngest daughter, Joy, is married and lives at Woking. She has one daughter.

The William Hosker Family

William Hosker, known as "Pop" to his family, and "Wapiti Bill" to his neighbours, was born in Manchester, England in 1878. It was there that he married Annie Finch, and their first two boys were born, Arthur in 1907 and Harold in 1909.

In 1910, Wapiti Bill decided to try a new life, so he came to Canada, leaving his wife and boys in England until he got settled. He found work on a farm near London, Ontario at first, but soon headed west. He worked as a cowhand on a ranch near Calgary for a time, and then joined the growing throng of settlers heading north. At Edson he loaded his wagon with settler's effects and guided his horses up the Edson Trail to the Peace River country.



Mr. and Mrs. William Hosker, 1937.

He looked the country over for awhile, and then found a spot to his liking on the Pipestone Creek, not far from the Wapiti River. He filed on SW 23-70-8-W6 in July, 1915. That winter he worked at the Van Horne Sawmill on the Wapiti, and stayed on over the summer as watchman. He was then able to send for his family, and also get lumber to build a house in time for their arrival.

One of the most exciting experiences of his early days in the Peace River country was rafting grain down the Wapiti, Smoky and Peace rivers. This was during the time when the railway was being built into the country and grain was needed in large amounts to feed the horses used on construction of the railway grade. The scows used for rafting the grain were built on the Wapiti, of logs and lumber. When they got downstream to their destination, and the grain was unloaded, the scows were dismantled and the logs sold at a good price for building purposes. Being a river freighter was not an easy job. When the scow became grounded in mid stream, there was nothing to do but carry the grain in a tarpaulin to shore, through the knee-deep, swift, cold water, until the vessel was light enough to free herself, and then reload in like manner. Wages were well earned indeed.

After Mrs. Hosker, Art and Harold arrived in May of 1916 on the newly built railway, they settled into their new home on the banks of the Pipestone Creek. Though raised in a city, Mrs. Hosker, a cheerful and hard working person, soon had their home comfortable and their pantry full with garden produce, wild fruit and the wild meat that Wapiti Bill became proficient at providing. Mr. Hosker had never hunted until he came to Canada, but he wasn't long in learning to handle a rifle with ease, shooting moose and deer for food and trophies, and bear for the safety of his domestic animals. In a short while their home was attractively furnished with bear rugs on the floor and several sets of antlers adorning the walls.



The Hosker "kids" — Ralph, Art, Hilda and Harold. Taken in 1969.

The two young boys soon found themselves joined by a sister Hilda, born in 1920, and another brother, Ralph, born in 1925.

There was always lots to do on the Hosker farm. Besides farming the land, the Hoskers raised cattle and hogs, and in the early days, also had a lot of horses for farming and riding. During the early forties horse power was replaced by tractor power for the farming operation. A car was obtained for travelling. The boys, all being interested in mechanics as soon as they saw tractors and cars, got into the business of operating a threshing outfit, and also a sawmill. They had a John Deere 15-27 to use on the sawmill and a Hart Parr for the threshing outfit. Their sawmill was first located on the Wapiti and then they moved closer to home along the Pipestone. Harold ran it for his dad, and later Art bought it and moved it across the Wapiti to saw for the Ross Lumber Company.

The farm was expanded by homesteading a second quarter near the home quarter, and later buying a half section north of it. Harold homesteaded nearby, and Art homesteaded across the creek.

Schooling was a real problem for the older boys, but by the time Hilda and Ralph were of school age, the Millarston School had opened, so they rode the six miles to and from there daily for some years. Later, Hilda took some schooling by staying with the Hennig family and attending St. John's school near Wembley. When the Pipestone Creek school opened in 1938, Ralph continued his education there.

Mr. and Mrs. Hosker's four children eventually all married and raised 15 grandchildren to brighten their senior years. Art married Dorothy Hennig and they raised two boys, Alvin and Wilbur. Harold married Myrtle Weaver and they had Annie, Jack and Joy. Hilda married Ronald Bisgrove and their family consisted of Betty, Ken, Gordon, Margaret and Dorothy. Ralph married Molly Farquhar and their children are Donald, Lawrence, Lynne and the twins, Rhonda and Ruth.

Mrs. Annie Hosker died on February 8th, 1951. Mr. Hosker remained at the farm alone until he retired to live with Hilda in Grande Prairie. He passed away there on October 27, 1970, at the age of 92.

The LaPlace Family

by J.B. LaPlace

I, Jean Baptiste LaPlace, was born the 6th of March, 1890, at Molles, Allier, France. Molles is a village of about 1100 people, 400 kilometers south of Paris. In 1906, I got a job at the Hotel de Paris where I found some Canadian magazines showing very large farms with 32 binders following each other, herds of cattle of several thousand head, and lakes covered with ducks. That was enough to convince me to go to Canada as soon as possible.

On May 26, 1907, I was in Quebec. I worked on a farm south of Montreal for $15 a month, then for a gardener for $20 a month. Later, I got to Edmonton where they gave me a job as teamster grading the railroad, Grand trunk, now C.N.R. Then I went cooking for the C.P.R. for $65 a month. Also worked as waiter at the Frank Hotel, Frank, Alberta, and as a waiter on a boat and the train. In my spare time I planned a dishwashing machine and got it patented in 1910.

At the beginning of September, 1910, I got a letter from the French consulate in Vancouver that I had to go to do my military service of two years. After more than two years of a bad time I decided why not run away? So that is what I did. I took the boat for Dover, England, and then from London to New York. But when the war broke out in 1914, I had to go back to France again.

I got married during a vacation of eight days, on February 15, 1919 to a girl from Maringue near Vichy, who was willing to go to Canada. Soon I was discharged and ready to go back to Canada, but we couldn't get a boat. They wanted to take all the soldiers first, so I took a job at the Excelsior Hotel in Vichy, and in September we were able to sail to New York. There we saw my friend, Mogue, who had helped me build my dishwashing machine. He had gone in the perfume business. I had sent him formulas from France and he had been very successful and wanted to give me a job, but I was in a hurry to go to the Peace River Country.

I had met some Canadian soldiers mostly from Ontario that wanted to take a homestead and soldier grant in the Peace River Country. My wife and I had tickets to Edmonton from the French government. At Edmonton we met some friends and a day or two after we were on the way to Grande Prairie by the Edmonton Dunvegan railway. It was a very slow train and swinging. Sometimes I thought the car was going to overturn. It took at least 24 hours to Grande Prairie.

Next day I went to the land office and filed on the N½ 25-70-8-W6. The entry said "granted to him for the said land under the provisions of the Soldier Settlement Land Regulations, 1918. Signed C.H. Clark, local agent."



A sample of the vegetables from the LaPlace garden, 1925. Mrs. LaPlace, Albert and dog, and J.B. LaPlace.

We returned to Edmonton. We took and furnished a small apartment near Jasper Avenue. I got a job at the power plant of the city unloading coal. There were three shifts of eight hours to unload 18 cars per day. Most of the furnaces were loaded automatically, some by hand. One very cold day they asked me to shovel coal into some furnaces. I got hot before I could raise the furnace heat! Meanwhile, my wife made dresses for the ladies of the parliament.

After the power house I went to Gainers Packing in south Edmonton until spring, then we moved to Grande Prairie. I had put all our furniture in crates and nothing got broken. We rented a cabin, a "shack" on two lots. Cold and high rent! It was hard to find a place.

We went to the homestead but couldn't do anything because there was still about three feet of snow. It had been a very hard winter that had started early. People had not dug out their potatoes which stayed under the snow and froze so potatoes got to a very high price of $10 a bushel. They had to get them from New Brunswick.

On the 20th of October we had a baby, born in our shack. Doctor Thomas, looking at the calendar said, "It will be for Tuesday or Thursday. Come call me at anytime."

It was Tuesday about two o'clock in the morning I went to call him. He came and said to me, "Sit down. Don't get nervous. Sit down and wait. Nature will do better work than me."

After awhile he said, "Put some wood in the stove. Make it hot," and soon he had a nice baby boy hanging by the feet. The baby was baptized and named Albert. Bishop Grouard happened to be there at that time.

I took any jobs I could find. After buying our groceries often I had 15¢ left. I decided to go for good on the homestead. There I cleared the land and made a stable for the horses. I took a load of wood every week that I sold for $4 a load to buy groceries. I took my lunch and food for the horses so that I wouldn't have to eat at the restaurant or put the horses in a stable. I watered them in Bear Creek.

I sold a load of wood to Mrs. Cave-Browne in Grande Prairie and made acquaintance with her two daughters. They were not married yet, Sela and Joyce. When Sela married Alan Watts they came to stay not far from us on the top of the bank of the Wapiti River. They were to us the best people I ever met. We had nearly all good neighbors.

I got a loan from the Soldier Settlement Board. I bought a team of horses ($800) and two cows. At the beginning they wouldn't give me a loan on that land saying I never would make a living on such wooded land. They would rather see me taking a farm, but I was afraid to go too far in debt and Captain Campbell spoke for me. I got a loan which I paid back. Captain and Mrs. Campbell had their home across the Pipestone Creek raising the finest registered cattle.

Winter came. I had not been able to build a house, only walls with small logs covered with bed sheets, just one room, with a wood stove in the center, in one corner the cooking stove, and a table. This table was a door screwed on the wall so we could raise and hook it up. Underneath it was a drawer with bedding. A Frenchman came and asked to stay with us; you could see only one bed (the baby was sleeping with us). The people that would come wondered where that man slept. It was in the drawer under the table!



Jean B. LaPlace, when he was night clerk at the Hotel Majestic Palace in France, 1939.

Our bed was near the stove. One day our baby, Albert, put his little hand against the pipe nearly red hot. He was badly burned. I thought he was to lose the small finger. We put his hand in milk that took off the pain, and plenty of vaseline, well wrapped. It healed okay.

The following spring I bought two more horses and tried to break the land with an ordinary plow. It was doing a bad job and was hard work. My wife drove the horses while I held the plow. Albert was with us. He was picking flowers. When he didn't return my wife got nervous, yelling, "Where is my baby?" A few days before we had seen a bear in that place and not far from there I had dug deep holes for water. We were searching all over, when the baby raised from the tall grass with flowers in one hand. He had been asleep.

By working long hours and always making improvements, finally I could plow from one end to the other, one mile long, with six horses. Where the trees were too big, I used dynamite and four horses to pull the stumps apart. Most of the time I had Joe Grabbit to help me. He had a homestead half a mile from us. He was a bachelor.

On February 10, 1925, Louis was born. Before daylight, my wife had colic so I jumped on a horse and went to get Mrs. Brooks. A few minutes after I was back, the baby was born. I had studied a book from the government while waiting for the baby, so knew what to do.

The place was looking good then. It was a farm - eight horses, a bunch of cattle, an average of 60 pigs, about 200 chickens, turkeys, geese and ducks.

Albert was not getting along well with the chickens. When he would come to the house to get a sandwich, the chickens would follow him and steal his sandwich, and a turkey weighing 25 pounds wouldn't stand for his cap with a red pompom. He would carry it away and Albert would get mad at him.

On May 4th, 1922, I was naturalized a British subject.

I had a garden with all kinds of vegetables and strawberries. I got a lot more than we needed so if someone would come by and were short of vegetables, they could get what they needed. I had sometimes cabbages weighing 18 pounds - too big for the market. I was selecting grain, vegetables, and eggs from the best layers for the incubator. I got some grain from the government and seeded it. I improved it by selecting the best heads, hand threshing them, then seeding that grain apart, so I could exhibit it in Grande Prairie, Edmonton and Toronto. I was generally getting first or second prize.

When I heard of the World Exhibition at Regina, they were to seed, mill and bake the wheat. There was going to be 150 prizes. I chose the Reward wheat being early with strong straw, originally from Russia. I had to send one bushel before spring so during the cold days all the family worked at it kernel by kernel with a magnifying glass. I got a second prize for the Reward wheat. That was sold, I believe, for $400. As it was the depression, it was more than I got for the whole crop. I got many congratulations letters, from the Chamber of Commerce of Edmonton, most of the banks and others. Miss Olga Schmidt had come several times to help us several years before.

In 1929 I sold a farm that I had inherited from the father of my mother that I never knew. With the money, I had a large area of land cleared. I had two men working for me, Joe Grabbit and Paul and his sister. I had hired Wapiti Bill Hosker to do some breaking with his tractor. My wife was pregnant. On one Sunday, a nice warm day, August 4th, 1929, after dinner she had some colic. I said to Joe, "Quick, take the children to Watts', and you, Paul, get Doctor Carlisle at Wembley."

They were not gone out of the yard when the baby was born. I did as I had done for Louis. When the doctor arrived, everything was okay. He just put some liquid in the eyes of the baby. Mrs. Paul came to take care of the baby and his mother. All the children grew up without sickness, and full of life.

The children were getting older. There was no school in the district, so Mrs. MacAlister, myself and others, we decided to see the possibility to have a school. The government set rules and regulations. We had a meeting in the community. I was nominated chairman, Mrs. MacAlister secretary. Mr. Watts was on the board, also. Soon the school (Millarston) was built by some conscientious men doing good work at a fair price in the center of the district. Soon there was a road graded. We had built also a bungalow for the teacher and a stable for the children's horses, and got up a large pile of cord wood. We hired Miss Lewis as teacher (now Mrs. Lambert living in Edmonton) at $800 per year.

We not only had school, but often Friday we had a dance and would collect 25¢ a person. That paid for a secondhand piano, some pots and dishes. I made a large cupboard to store the materials. The fiddler kept busy. At midnight we would have a break and coffee. Everybody would bring a cake or pies and it went on until nearly daylight. Everybody was satisfied.

On Sunday there was often a Catholic mass and a Protestant service. All they had to do in the winter was make a fire in a large stove that took cord wood four feet long. Every month the school board had a meeting and the teacher used to serve us coffee before starting home. It was about three miles from our place. In summer Albert and Louis used to go to school on horse back, both on old Sandy, and in winter they had a little cutter well closed in with a hole just to have the lines through and at any kind of weather they would go. Sometimes they had hot stones to warm their feet. When it was 40 below zero my wife was afraid they would be frozen but they would come home singing happily.

Every winter I used to get my ice at the Wapiti River. Also logs for building. I got some logs 50 feet long. One winter I went alone to get some logs. During the winter there had been a thaw and the ice had piled here and there. I had to go around these hills of ice and it was hard to say if it was safe. It was warm. There was a chinook wind and the water was rising fast, but I knew I could unhitch the horses easily and that the logs would float. Not far from Osbornes I noticed I had forgot my axe. I took one horse and went to get the axe. Coming back the water was coming to the belly of the horse and did not feel safe, but I made it.

Things went from bad to worse in 1934. I couldn't get more than three cents a bushel for oats, when it cost me five cents to thresh it. Pigs were about two cents in Edmonton, little over the cost of freight. For a select pig of 200 pounds, you couldn't expect to get more than five dollars. As I knew how to dress an animal as I had worked in a packing plant, I killed four young cattle and next day I went to Grande Prairie with 16 quarters of beef. I couldn't sell the front quarter for more than two cents a pound and the hind quarter for five cents. Butter was eight cents, eggs five cents a dozen on exchange of groceries, no cash.

My wife, when writing to her mother and sister, she was telling them how bad it was. One of her sisters wrote back saying, "Come back. My husband will give a job to Jean on the railroad." I couldn't lose much to go and see in France how things were going, and if it would be possible to do some import and export of furs, which were very cheap, too.

We had a sale in November 1935, after all the grain had been taken to the elevator. Everything was sold very cheap. Old Sandy was sold for five dollars for trap bait. Chickens 15¢ each. I did not sell the land in case I could return. I rented to Mr. Farr, who would buy if I wanted. I got tickets for Paris, with a return ticket for me.

It was not easy to say good-bye to the neighbors, when we had nothing but our legs, no more carriage not even a horse. The last night we went and stayed at Watts', then Mr. Watts took us to the station at Wembley.

In 1939 I was expecting to return to Canada by November but as the war started in September there was no chance to go. I won't describe the horrible things I saw during the occupation. Albert was deported to Germany and I did not expect to see him anymore. Louis had the feeling of a revolver on the temple while he was driving a truck.

We had to wait until July 1947 to get a boat to come back to Canada. We were allowed to take only $300 each so we couldn't do much. I tried to find a locale to open a fruit and vegetable store. I did, but after a few years I couldn't stand anymore on my legs from seven a.m. to 11 p.m. I got a buyer and sold, then went into the building business.

In the meanwhile, my sons got married, and later, in the basement of my house we started to make kitchen cabinets. Soon it was too small and we bought lots in Montreal north, and built a good-sized shop. A few years later we moved again to St. Vincent de Paul and finally not far from Montreal at Terrebonne, where we are doing well. My three sons are working together and some of their sons, and each family has their own house in Montreal and a summer cottage in the country. My wife and I are living in a comfortable cottage near Rawdon. We have all we need and see my children at weekends.

My first wife died in 1959 of cancer and I got married again in 1964. All we have to do is take care of ourselves. She is 74 years and me over 88.

The Donald MacAlister Family

Donald Edgar MacAlister was born in Hampton, N.B., February 22, 1923 to Walter and Agnes MacAlister. He came west with his family in 1927. Their first home was at Equity, after which they moved to Millarston. Don attended Millarston School until they went to the west coast in 1933. While there, he attended Croften School. During their three years at Crofton, Don got his fill of fishing and rowing in the ocean.

The family returned to Millarston in 1936. Don finished school to grade eight at Millarston, after which he worked for farmers, Don Kennedy, and Art Hosker but mostly for his brother Iain. Winters were spent working in logging camps.

In 1942 Don joined the 49th Edmonton Regiment. He trained in Grande Prairie and Calgary and went overseas in July 1943 to England, then to Italy, as far north as Pisa. At times Don received letters from his sister Peggy but one day when he felt too lazy to write he said to his buddy, Jack Bennet, from Fort St. John, B.C. "Why don't you?" Jack did and after that Jack and Peggy corresponded off an on. After the war Jack came home with Don to meet Peggy and they were later married.

Wounded in action, Don got a medical discharge just before V.E. day, May of '45. After his discharge, he started farming a half section of V.L.A. land at Dimsdale, and his father's quarter, SE 19-70-7-W6. He became a member of the Pipestone Creek Legion when it was formed.

During the war Don had also received letters from Elizabeth (better known as Betty) Brumpton, a local girl from the Dimsdale district. Don and Betty were married on April 27, 1949.

Betty was born October 1, 1927 in Dimsdale, Alberta, to Thomas and Ellen Brumpton, who had come from England to settle in the Dimsdale district. Betty attended school at both Wapiti and Millarston schools. After this Betty worked for Helms and the Ted Day family of South Wapiti.

After Don and Betty were married, they spent the summer living in a little house in Don's brother, Iain's yard, and the winter in the bush logging. In the spring of 1950 they rented Art Hosker's land, where they lived for four years. While they were living there, Donald Hunter was born, February 8, 1951, and Ellen Susan on March 21, 1953. In the spring of 1954 Don and Betty moved to Grande Prairie and Don started to work for Grande Prairie Lumber (now North Canadian Forest Industries). After several months in Grande Prairie they moved into the Grande Prairie Lumber Company's housing camp



Back: Tom Sterr, Rob MacAlister, Carl Peterson.
Middle: Gail Sterr, Bonnie Kaczmarek, Pat MacAlister, Art Kaczmarek, Susan Peterson.
Front: Donald, Betty, Lisa and Don MacAlister.

which is now part of the log yard. Don started piling lumber after which he became a machine operator. During the years they lived at the mill Elizabeth Gail was born, December 6, 1954 and Bonnie Kathleen was born October 16, 1958, extending their family to four.

In 1962 the Watts' property at Pipestone Creek came up for sale, so Don and Betty sold their other land and bought the three quarters E½ 14-70-8-W6, and NW 14-70-8-W6. Don continued to work at N.C.F.I., working up to the position of foreman, while Betty helped take care of their growing herd of Angus cattle. On October 25, 1969, Lisa Louise was born to complete their family. Don and Betty's home became a gathering place for the numerous young cousins and friends.

During the early 70's Don added three more quarters to the farm, the homesteads of Ed Wood, and Edgar Jebb, and a slough quarter that had previously been leased.

In 1975 Don quit working at the mill and settled into full time farming. They now run about a hundred head of cattle, and have built up a herd of pleasure horses.

After Don was home full time, Betty took her turn in the working force and spent several years with the Preventive Social Services.

Donald and Susan started school in Swanavon and Avondale in Grande Prairie and then, when the family moved to Pipestone, all the children attended school in Wembley, riding on the Arvid Olsson bus.

Donald completed grade nine at Wembley, then went to work at N.C.F.I., starting by shovelling under the deck and piling lumber, then progressing to driving machines. Donald still works for N.C.F.I., but is now working as a certified welder and chargehand. Donald also has his own farm.

Susan married Carl Peterson of Debolt, on June 16, 1971. Carl works for N.C.F.I. driving truck and working in the scale house. Carl and Sue have a house in Wembley. Susan is busy raising a son, Troy Allen, born October 15, 1973 and a daughter, Tanya Rayanne, born October 9, 1976.

Gail married Tom Sterr, of Sexsmith, June 21, 1975 and is now living on a quarter section north of Sexsmith. Tom works as a forest technician for N.C.F.I. Gail worked as a secretary for about six years, first at the Beaverlodge Air Force Base and later for Canada Manpower. Gail is now staying home to raise their son, Thomas George Perley, born March 14, 1978.

Bonnie married Arthur Kaczmarek, of Webster, on July 15, 1977. Bonnie, who has her Beautician licence, is now taking a business course at the Grande Prairie Regional College. Arthur is a heavy duty equipment operator. After doing some travelling Arthur and Bonnie would like to buy land in the area.

Lisa is attending school at Wembley. She enjoys her pets, especially her horses. During the summer Lisa shows a few of her horses at the local fairs. She is now playing clarinet in the school band and has just started taking guitar lessons.

The Martin Moors Family

by Else Moors

Martin Moors came to the Wembley district in 1938. He had been homesteading in the Goodfare district since about 1930, having come from Lithuania (formerly Germany) in 1928. He bought NW 35-70-8-W6, south of Wembley, from Chester Van Schaick in the fall of 1937. As there were no buildings or fences on the place, he got logs ready for the house in Goodfare and then moved in the spring. A few years later he bought the quarter across the road from Lavere Jensen, which is more than half muskeg. Martin did some carpenter work in his spare time, for friends mostly.

I was born in Germany and came to Saskatchewan with my parents at the age of 12, in 1930. In 1945 I met and married Martin in Edmonton where he was doing some work for friends. We came home on the train, a long trip at that time. Martin had been feeding quite a few pigs in the wartime but in 1945, he had only four horses. Soon we got some chickens and a cow. Next year our first son, Ricki, was born. Ellen arrived a year later and Paul in 1949. We built an addition to the house and had a well drilled. In the fifties I started selling eggs direct to customers in Grande Prairie which I kept up as long as we were on the farm.



Martin and Else Moors in the back, Ellen, Paul and Ricki in front. July 1954.

The children all started school in Pipestone Creek, walking the two miles. When the school was closed, they were taken by bus to Wembley.

In 1959 we sold the farm at Wembley and moved that fall to a farm northeast of Clairmont. Here the children attended school in Sexsmith until they finished high school.

Martin's health was never too good, and he had several heart attacks. So, in 1968, we sold the farm and retired to Grande Prairie where he died in March 1972.

Ellen went to University and became a pharmacist. She is married to Don Ingram. They have two girls and live in Edmonton. Ellen still works a few days a week as manager in Baydala's Drug Store in Mill Woods.

Ricki went to Fairview Agricultural School for two winters. Later he finished high school and started agriculture at university but did not finish. He is married to Maureen Lock. They have a boy and a girl. Ricki now farms at Teepee Creek where Maureen teaches.

Paul was the first to get married, to Cathy Lock. He has been an Air Traffic Controller at the International Airport near Edmonton for several years. He and Cathy and their two boys live on a farm near Thorsby. He farms during his days off from the airport job.

I left Grande Prairie in 1973 and did some travelling. I visited Mr. and Mrs. Hamm twice in Germany. Now I make my home in Clearwater, B.C.

The Arvid Olsson Family

Arvid Olsson swung aboard the school bus and away driver and students went to the Wembley school. Many years later, Arvid was still swinging aboard the school bus heading for Wembley. There were a couple of differences in the two times, though. The first time Little Arvid, student with lard-cum-lunch pail in hand, swung aboard the horse-drawn vehicle driven by Dan Paul. In later years when Arvid swung aboard the bus, he was the driver, and the vehicle was a yellow motorized County bus. So, for folks who think riding a school bus was new in this area when Arvid started driving in the late fifties, he can assure them otherwise. He remembers well Dan Paul's old-fashioned, canvas-covered sleigh complete with air-tight heater in winter, and high-wheeled wagon in summer, that conveyed him to school in Wembley for a number of years in the thirties.

He remembers well, too, his more than 20 years driving the motorized bus from Pipestone Creek to Wembley from 1957 until 1979. Through mud, blizzard or sunshine, few days were missed.

The Olsson story really began in Sweden in the twenties. Arvid was born to Olaf and Anna Olsson, one of nine children. In 1927, the Olssons came to Canada, settling first at Stettler, Alberta. A few years later they headed northwest, and settled at Aspen Ridge, on NW 20-70-8-W6. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Olsson there were Lars, Sven, Arvid, Teakla, Knute, Freda and Martha who came to the Peace River Country.

After Arvid had gone to school in Wembley, he went to work as a logger in B.C. for three years. In the mid forties, he was back at Aspen Ridge. At that time, the teacher of the Aspen Ridge School was Miss Ingibjorg Jakobson. She was born in Arborg, Manitoba, had taught a year at Mount Saskatoon, north of the Saskatoon Mountain, and then came to Aspen Ridge.

Arvid and Ingibjorg were married in 1944. They lived on the Dick Richardson place, Arvid farming seven rented quarters and Ingibjorg continuing teaching. During those years at Aspen Ridge, two children were born to the Olssons, Lisa and Harvey.

In 1947, they bought the George Rozik place NW 34-70-8-W6 in the Pipestone Creek district, built a new house there and moved in. They still owned land across the creek in Aspen Ridge, which they used for pasturing

their cattle. Now, Ingibjorg taught at Pipestone Creek, at the Wapiti School at Dimsdale, and then at Wembley. While they lived on the Rozik place, two more sons were born, Raymond and Warren (better known as Buddy).

In the fall of 1957, the Pipestone Creek school was closed and the students in the area were bussed to Wembley. That was when Arvid began his bus driving career, and he continued in that position until 1979. Ingibjorg by that time had become established as Wembley's grade one teacher, and she is fondly remembered by hundreds of Wembley area people as their first teacher.

In the early sixties, the Olssons bought the Martin Moors land from Mrs. Lange, who had purchased it from Moors in 1959. There, besides bus driving and teaching, the Olssons built up their herd of cattle to about 70 head, which they continue to care for.

After completing her schooling in Wembley, Lisa went to Edmonton where she became a comptometer operator. She married Henri Laforce, who works for North American Road Company. They now live in Spruce Grove, and have two children, Robert and Annette.

Harvey went to N.A.I.T. and took training in the electrical field. He then put his training to work at several points around Alberta. A few years ago, he left the electrical field for the construction business and is now working for North American Road also. He married Judy Stewart and they live on the old Rozik place south of Wembley.

Raymond went to forestry school at Hinton and has been with the Forestry ever since. He is now Head Ranger at Calling Lake, Alberta. He is married to Irene Pazniak, who has recently taken training as a lab technician.

Warren, (Buddy), is presently working for Proctor and Gamble, at their new sawmill site south of Grande Prairie. He lives at Grande Prairie and at his parent's home. Buddy is not married.

Arvid and Ingibjorg have retired from bus driving and teaching now, and concentrate on maintaining their herd of cattle, doing some gardening and the occasional bit of fishing. Arvid is probably as well-known for his interest in fishing and hunting as being a bus driver. He has spent many relaxing hours along the Wapiti, and other streams, fishing for pike, trout and grayling that they have to offer. He says that the fish in the Wapiti are diminishing, as a result of "progress".



The Olsson family.
Back: Warren (Bud), Harvey, Raymond.
Front: Ingibjorg, Lisa and Arvid.

The Bert Osborne Family

by Mima Osborne

Albert (Bert) Lawrence Osborne and wife, Lillian Jemima (Mima) came to Canada the summer of 1916 from Oregon. Bert had read of the wonderful hunting of big game, fishing and trapping in the north and often spoke of going north some day.

Spring of 1916 we were racing our three thoroughbred horses at race meets in Oregon and Washington. Several of our racing friends asked Bert if he would care to race the next two or three months in Canada as they were shipping their horses up and had room for three or four more horses so, of course, Bert said "Yes." The horses could enter Canada for two or three months free of duty. We all raced at Calgary, Edmonton, Brandon, Regina and Saskatoon. Our friends went back to the States but we went back to Customs and paid the duty on our horses, took in eleven more race meets before boarding our horses near Claresholm. We had done very well racing.

We moved to Moyie, B.C. for the winter. Bert worked in the lead mine and had a short trap line as a side line.

Our Myrtle Marian was born February 10, 1917. We stayed at Moyie till July, 1918, when we picked up our horses and came by rail to Grande Prairie where we put up a tent and I stayed there for two or three weeks while Bert scouted around for a homestead. Our homestead was about five miles south of what is now Wembley but that was before the rail had come west of Grande Prairie, so our Post Office and closest store was Lake Saskatoon around nine miles away. There was also a school and church at Lake Saskatoon.

We moved to the homestead, camped out in our not too big tent, our belongings stacked all around us till Bert cut and hauled logs and built our new home, and later a barn for the stock as we soon had a few chickens and a milk cow.

Our first son, Albert Lawrence, was born January 28, 1919.

Deer, moose and bear were plentiful as were wild raspberries, very tiny strawberries, saskatoons, chokecherries, blueberries, and cranberries for the picking most years.

Our Raymond Harold was born July 22, 1924. We leased land near the Wapiti River in 1925 and made it our home for 19 years. Raised wonderful gardens there. Bert began outfitting and guiding hunters into big game country south and west each fall for many years.

Just a few years after we moved to the river the first settlers began settling on the south side of the river, moving their belongings over in a row boat or rafting when the river was high. When the water was low they could ford. Some stock had to swim, other times forded. Real hardships regardless.

It was spring break-up when Morris Lofstrom rode horseback to bring South Wapiti mail over to meet with Pipestone Creek. Snow melting, sloppy and muddy roads. Ice still heavy and solid on the south side of the river but on the north side, Pipestone Creek was rushing down very swiftly and cutting away river ice also. Morris rode across the ice and jumped the horse into swimming water so swift it washed the horse down and under the ice but luckily Morris had left the horse to swim to the bank where he hung onto tree roots till Mr. Watts could help him up out of the icy water. Morris was rushed to our house and loaned dry clothes and drank hot coffee to drive out the frost. In a few hours he was away to town, a mighty lucky man to be alive.

Our children attended school at Wembley, although Ray did take some grades at Pipestone Creek school.

Mrytle and Rall Trottier were married in 1935 and moved over to Sturgeon Heights, but often visited with us.

In the spring of 1944 the ice in the river was very heavy when the river broke up, pushing huge blocks of ice up on the river banks, breaking the ferry cables and tearing down the towers on both sides of the river. A terrible wreckage. After the river had cleared of ice and the towers put up again a heavy cable had to be taken across the river in a row boat to make connection for the ferry. Dan St. Arnault was to row the boat and Cliff Henderson from the Department of Public Works would unroll the cable which was very hard to handle. About halfway across, the cable caught the boat, turning it over. Cliff and Dan held onto the boat, drifting downstream. Bert was coming home on horseback and swam the horse out to where he could throw his rope to catch them. First throw, no good; second time Cliff caught the rope and hung onto it and the boat, and Bert swam the horse back to shore. They had gone all of a half mile or more in that icy water. Neither could stand up when they first landed. Cliff went to bed in warm blankets, with hot water bottle for three or four hours at our place, then went home but was back next day when Bert rowed the boat and again Cliff let out the cable. They nearly tipped again, but pulled out of it. Dan took a very bad cold and wanted no more swims. I can't blame him, either.

There were some saw mills across the river by now, which operated for quite a few years. They would bridge the river after it was frozen to haul out their logs.

Walter Stretch was working at one of Fred Reynold's logging camps when he broke his leg. They splinted his leg, made a stretcher, put him in a truck and started for the doctor. When they reached the river, Fred called across to see if there was any way to cross. Bert said, "No, only in this case we will try."

Bert got three long poles, one for each of us and one for Fred. We each carried a pole in one hand, the other hand on the stretcher. We would hit the ice with the end of the pole quite hard in several places then take another step. If the pole went through the ice we would side-step and test some more, all the way across. Once more that poor man was put into a truck, and rushed to Grande Prairie hospital. Yes, he fully recovered in time. I'm sure I never want to cross ice like that again. The river ice went out the next day with a crushing roar and grumble.



Lawrence and Bert Osborne, Myrtle Trottier with oldest son Albert, and Ray Osborne.



Back: Ral Trottier, Bert Osborne, Mima Osborne, Myrtle Trottier, and Albert Trottier.
Front: Dale, Darryl, Donnie and Brian Trottier.

Lawrence, like his Dad, was a great lover of horses, never happier than when he was riding or working with the horses. He liked breaking them for saddle horses or for pack horses. He joined the army during W.W.2 and was killed on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

After Lawrence's death, we moved from the river up to our own land west of Pipestone Creek. Bert gave up guiding and outfitting hunters, so sold most of our horses, keeping a few favorites for our own use. Now we had more pasture and feed for our little herd of registered Herefords.

Ray was away working a lot of the time then, but our grandsons, Myrtle and Rall's boys, would spend most of their summer holidays with us and we sure enjoyed having them.

Myrtle and Rall had a large family, five boys and one girl: Albert (Bert), Darryl, Dale, Brian, Donny and Sherryl. Rall passed away on December 14, 1976 and Myrtle on March 2, 1978.

Ray married Esther Rosinne on January 15, 1955 at Hanna, Alberta and they came to Grande Prairie to live and later to build their own home here. They had two girls and two boys, Sharon, Sandra, Kenny and Lory.

My Bert passed away May 30, 1965. I sold the farm across the Pipestone Creek, and our cattle and horses, and bought a little home in Grande Prairie.

I have 10 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, and one great great grandson. I'm proud of each and every one in our family.

The William Schmidt Family

by Arabelle Schmidt

Willy Schmidt, Bill as he was known, was born November 4, 1902, at Woblanse, Germany, Province of Pommerin.

Willy arrived in Canada March 13, 1924. As a young man he worked around Airdrie for a Mr. Arbuckle. It was from the Arbuckle children he learned to speak English and with what he learned earlier in school, he soon could speak and write. It was at this time he was on a trail drive from Calgary to Edmonton with a hundred head of horses.

Leaving Airdrie, he resided in Golden Spike for awhile, then in 1927, he came to the Wembley area and finally settled in the Pipestone Creek District.

We had no school, so Maureen (daughter) took grade one by correspondence. She was able to attend school for



The Willy Schmidt family, 1955.
Back: Maureen and Arabelle.
Centre: Willy.
Front: Gerald.

grade two, followed by Gerald the next year. Pipestone Creek School taught grades one to nine. Maureen completed her schooling in Grande Prairie.

We put up our wood supply for the year by sawing and splitting to dry during the summer for the cook stove and using block wood for the heater.

The Wapiti River was our source of drinking and cooking water. Ice was cut and hauled home, placed in a building and covered with sawdust. This lasted until cutting time again. This was an annual event with the neighbours each getting their supply. It was a cold slippery job.

Then there were the good old threshing days. The cutting of the crops with the horses and binder, (later the tractor and binder), was a one man operation. Then there was the stooking — the golden fields looked nice but it was back-breaking, long, hard work during the harvest season.

Willy and a neighbor crew threshed for quite a few years, then the change to combines. One or two men, or a man and his wife took care of the crops, thus the "threshing crews" were no more.

Willy loved the land, the soil he knew so well, country living and the happiness he shared with the visits by his grandchildren. It was here he lived until his passing, April 26, 1972. He has left us but is not forgotten and our lives are richer because we knew him.

I reside where I like it best, the open spaces, but that is fast disappearing, too.

There's been a great change taking place in the country, "the oil boom", etc, friendliness of days gone by are gone. In the mad rush, time isn't taken to really enjoy the wonderful place we live in.

"Along the Wapiti" has been a lovely place to live, I'm glad I didn't miss it. There were no truly bad times, only the good times to remember.

Frederick and Augusta Schmidt

Frederick and Augusta Schmidt came to Canada, along with their daughter, Herta (now Mrs. John Wagar), in 1926, and settled on a farm near Stony Plain. They lived there for one year and then, accompanied by all of the family (sons Willy and Paul, plus daughter Minnie, her husband Frank Marth and small son Heinz who had arrived in Canada previously), came to the Wembley district, settling on the old Kent farm until the boys built a house. This house was built on Willy's homestead, SW 26-70-8-W6, and Mr. and Mrs. Schmidt lived there until they died, Father Schmidt on March 15, 1955 and Mother Schmidt in October, 1960.

The Frank Stoll Story

I was born in our farm home on the NE 13-71-8-W6 in early 1919, creating some hardship for my uncle P.U. Clubine, who travelled by horseback to fetch the doctor, on a real cold January night. I was born the second son of George and Theresa Stoll, of a family which eventually became four of us. Those were hard years, as the railway ended at Grande Prairie and my father's farm was a favorite stopping place for some of the farmers to the west who, while delivering grain and livestock or buying supplies in Grande Prairie would arrive at night, stay over and deliver their goods to town the next day, and return for another overnight stop going home the following day. Cabs on sleighs and snowplowed roads were unheard of in those days and many farmers walked or ran behind their "four-ups" to keep warm.

My schooling started March 1, 1925, when, along with my brother John, I attended Wapiti School #2802. Our first morning ended in mishap, as it was springtime and all the sloughs were full of water and my brother was not as accomplished a rider as myself. We were both on the same horse and we had several cold water dumpings, which required our returning home and starting fresh and dry the next morning. However, we finally made it to school where I spent most of my time for the next eight years. When my sisters started school, I was given a team to drive, in summer on a democrat, and in winter as a canvas covered caboose. With driving the team, I took on several more responsibilities such as hauling a five gallon milk can of drinking water each day, picking up an extra pupil and the teacher a mile down the road, and seeing that the foot warmers were in place as well as the robes and comforters to keep us warm in the winter time.

Our horses used to get quite cold standing in the school barn, and would get quite frisky at going home time, and every once in awhile we would have a runaway. Sometimes our team would upset our rig and go home without us, and my father would usually rescue us so we would not have to walk the three miles home. After a few such episodes, we learned to master the horses and did not experience so much grief.

After a few years, the school term was changed, and we attended school from September 1 to June 30. Holidays were July and August instead of the cold January and February months.

One September, the first day of school, a porcupine who had taken up residence in the school barn over the holidays, had to be evicted. I shall never forget how our teacher, just out of Normal school, went into the barn and bravely shooed out Mr. Porcupine with a broom.

About this time we were beginning to think in terms of young men, and so had to try our hand at smoking behind the barn. I guess there were 12 or 14 of us, and so the cloud billowing up behind the barn attracted our teacher's attention. We were duly taken to trial and our penalty was to keep on smoking, only in front of the rest of the class. The teacher rolled the cigarettes and we had to smoke continually. It wasn't long till most of us petered out, but my brother and Oliver Talbot made it until the next day, when they, too, became quite ill.



Frank with his oat crop in 1939.

It was customary in those times to raise money for Christmas and have a concert on the last school day before Christmas break. Some of the teachers showed great talent in ways of raising funds as well as grooming 25 to 30 pupils into budding actors, actresses, and accomplished singers. Sometimes a mother or two would help, play the piano or whatever, and I always looked forward to our final practises in the Dimsdale hall.

Another great occasion in those days was the end of term school picnic, where everyone became an athlete, a ball player, or horseshoe pitcher and enjoyed all the food, the homemade ice cream, the lemonade, and as we grew older, a dance in the hall.

Time passed along and I was taking extra classes with our then teacher, Allan McQuarrie, mostly on Saturday mornings in late May and June so that we could easily pass our Grade 8 exams and be ready for high school. We used to take our lunch and after classes, A.H. McQuarrie and I would ride some of the nature trails where I learned to appreciate the great outdoors with him.

After grade school I was privileged to attend high school in Wembley. Times were hard and not all kids were as lucky. Mrs. E.A.M. Storm taught all four high school grades, and her class would number between 25 and 30 pupils. There was no choice of subjects, you just took what was given each year and after four or five years you knew enough to attend university to become a teacher, a lawyer, a doctor or whatever.

Some of my memories of school days are riding five miles to attend Sunday school on Sunday mornings, growing a garden, building bird houses for the school fair, skating and tobogganing parties, sleigh rides on moonlight nights, belonging to young people's groups and sharing the work and fun with them.

Arriving home from one such event later than usual, I found the bunkhouse my brother and I shared had been on fire. My father and brother had put it out, but most of our belongings were ruined either by fire or water. So, nothing to do but repair it and salvage whatever we could. Many of my reminders of school were lost at that time.

That same year my mother passed away and my father was not up to his usual self so I stayed home to help put the crop in, planning on returning to school the following September. My last year of school was spent at our other farm where I tended some stock, batched and went to school.

I got the feeling of independence that year. So, for about the next three years I worked at clearing land with an axe and shovel and a team of horses grubbing out trees so the land could be broken and put into production. In the second winter (about 1937), Harold Hosker and I rigged up a wood sawing and grain grinding outfit and went around to all of our neighbors and cut their woodpiles into stove lengths and ground their grain for livestock feed. We built up quite a business which I carried on for several years.

We also would log off merchantable timber in nearby Pipestone Creek, saw it into lumber and sell it to neighbors.

I was married in June, 1940, to Irene Bradley and we were blessed with Joan in 1942 and Gordon in 1944. Joan married Charles White and they have three children, Steven, Denise and Janeen, living in the Rio Grande area where they are engaged in farming.



The Stoll Family in the early 1940's.
Back: Irene and Frank.
Front: Bud and Joan.

Gordon married Joan Miller and was employed by Fred Mason at the UFA bulk fuel until 1968 when he moved to Edmonton, passing away in 1970. They did not have any family and his wife Joan now is Mrs. Ron Caine and is living in Grande Prairie.

Throughout the war years, I carried on the farm along with my father, my brother spending some time in the services. In the wintertime I carried on much the same as before, ice cutting, woodsawing, and a little trapping. Then about 1943, R.A. Bunyan, a hardware merchant in Wembley, acquired a timber lease on what was then called Bald Hill in the South Wapiti area. This afforded many farmers an opportunity to go to the bush in the winter and earn extra cash to supplement their farm income.

There were many small mills in the bush when the leases first opened, and sometimes there were 18 to 20

trucks hauling lumber to planer mills at Wembley and Dimsdale. Mills were small, putting out 10,000 feet. Trucks were small, too, hauling about 5,000 feet per load.

About the same time a coal mine started at Pinto Creek, stripmining, and coal was hauled on the lumber road as well. More than one night we had as many as ten truck drivers waiting in our homestead shack for the bulldozer to come and open the road to Wembley. On one such experience we left the abandoned trucks stuck in the snow and I volunteered to take all of the drivers to Wembley by team and sleigh. This always seemed to happen at night and on this particular occasion, my horses got so tired I had to abandon the sleigh and ride one of the horses home across country. Our area seemed to be the part of the road where people had most of their difficulties with the drifts. Now it seems quite humorous to think about them.

For instance, taking A.K. Watts home one wintery night to Pipestone Creek and upon returning, leaving one trace fastened to the sleigh, and the horses becoming scared and spending most of the night finding pieces of sleigh and harness as well as the horses in the dark.

Once in the summertime, I picked Sam Wilson up on the road while it was raining, and he had just purchased a $1.95 "Stetson" from A.K. Watts' store. Dye was running down his face and onto the car seat, stains never to be removed.

Or Wapiti Bill yelling blood curdling "Whoas" at his car he had left parked in reverse, at the rear of our shack, when he turned it "on" by cranking it.

There are many other memories of happenings in the district throughout the years, such as Bill Henderson telling the wind, which had blown his hat into the swirling Wapiti current beyond retrieving, in his own flowery language, where it could go to. Rocky Mountain Brooks sitting on a log around a campfire during hunting season, telling us how it was and how it would be; or Dunc Bumstead with a perfectly groomed white team, Punch and Cap, in the stillness on a frosty morning going down the river hill, bells dingling. Irene and I each carrying a small baby sloshing up the hill, having abandoned our model A, when returning from a picnic in South Wapiti, to be the only ones to cross the river before the ferry went downstream and left most of the district on the wrong side; or packing coal in a sack along with Harold Hosker out of the Pipestone so we could sharpen our plow shares without having to leave them in town. Riding an old motorbike hell bent down the hill with no brakes and riding double on a single seat. Playing ball every Sunday in the summer, when everyone would pile into a rig and go to another district to challenge them; or just plain spend an hour or two in the bush pasture about 5 a.m. looking for the milk cow; or when I was a lad going to the lake to skinny dip around a bend in the shoreline because that was the only swimsuit we could afford. Riding home through the shortcut, in the dark, in the rain, from an A.L. Osborne stampede; or being chivareed and having a big cowbell tied to our bedspring on our wedding night.

We had an anxious time hurrying John Wagar to the doctor in Grande Prairie when a gas tank exploded in his face, and again when Bob McCullough was pinned beneath his car when a jack failed. Or Old Stoney breaking up sticks, trying to tell us we were launching the ferry too early and more ice would come and shatter it. Bert Osborne picking out a crossing on the porous ice in the spring so I could take a load of feed to the Indian packhorses across the river who had just come in from the winter's trapping, only to watch the ice "go out" two hours later. Helping to row the boat across among floating trees in highwater to rescue some mill workers who were north bound. Having pregnant South Wapiti women stay with us when river crossing was uncertain waiting for their "time" so we could rush them to the hospital.

Or fixing Bill Henderson's car each time he stayed too long in the bar and didn't make it all the way down the hill. Helping Pete Bartch put an axle in his old '28 on New Year's Day on the road so he could be home with his family. Going with the skidoo to meet the vet on a drifted road to bring back and administer some medicine for Otto Schadeck's sick cow. Hiking to Muskeg Lake and carrying home a nice mess of jacks with Percy and Gordon. Or cooking for a hunting party and seeing the mountains for the first time in the spring.

Watching Carl Berg blow his cap to smithereens with my 303 rifle when I doubted its accuracy to shoot a grizzly bear that was in a trap. He hung his hat in a tree and paced off 300 yards. "He shoots alright," he said.

Sleeping in a tent when our kids were real small at Ryan's meadows so we could pick a good supply of blueberries. Bringing my brother-in-law and his partner home from the bush when it was -60 because I knew they would be out of food, and my team travelled 24 hours practically non-stop so we wouldn't freeze.

Falling in the river and being rescued by Carl Brooks and Bill Schmidt while cutting ice. Or the thousands of trips "doubling up" to get our loads to the top of the river hill usually at day's end. Or Vic Elford nailing on another shoe while his horses had a "breather" when he got a contract for tamarac and spring was not too far off and the hill became slippery. Helping Lofstroms down the hill when an overnight chinook made the hill a glassy sheet of ice and they did not have their team shod. Rescuing a family on the river hill marooned with a burned out clutch, in a three-day rain. There were six children and Mom and Dad with no food for about 48 hours. I took them home with four horses on a wagon where they spent the night, then on to the train in Wembley so they could return to their Grande Prairie home.

The time Ed Wood, the ferryman, came to our house at 5 a.m. to tell us the high water had taken the ferry downstream and would I go to Lake Saskatoon for a boat in order to cross people over the river. It was a long tiring trip on muddy roads with a four-up, only to go to Dimsdale from the river to take some people home.

Then there were the threshing crews, getting our own thresher, and the worry of moving granaries from one farm to the other, quite often at night. Or trying to finish up, as so often happened in those days, before the snow got too deep. Some of the farmers used to stack their entire crop, which was threshed during the winter or the next spring.

Later, during World War II some combines came into the area and that was the beginning of a great change in farming methods. Most farms boasted of a tractor and as the horses were not needed to haul bundles to the threshers anymore, they were sold to meat processing plants and we entered the machine age. Someone figured out the hydraulic system, applied it to machinery and so bulldozers, backhoes and mounted agricultural machinery changed the whole concept of farming whereby one farmer today can do as much in one hour as eight six-horse teams could do all day.

Our whole way of life changed at this time. Rural electrification, telephones, better roads kept clear in winter, centralized schools, and better cars all contributed to this change. We were able to go more frequently to larger centres, to shop, to go to school, etc., without having to take the milk cow along because we could now make the trip between milkings. Electricity relieved the need for ice cutting and many other farm tasks which before were done by hand. Stoves and furnaces became automatic oil or gas burners and running water really came out of a tap.

In the spring of 1972 we sold our farm for health reasons and bought a house in Grande Prairie where we now reside. I am working as an agricultural fieldman and Irene parttime at the Herald Tribune. We still take an active part in community affairs and thank God for our many friends and acquaintances who have made our life so worthwhile.

Chester Wilbur Van Schaick

by F.R. Van Schaick

Chester Wilbur Van Schaick was born November 1899 in South Dakota. He came to Alberta in 1905 with his parents, Herbert and Nellie Van Schaick and went from Camrose to Greenlaw, north of Islay. In 1912 he drove a team of horses over the Edson Trail. He lived at Richmond Hill and went to Wapiti School.

He homesteaded the NW 35-70-8-W6 and farmed for a time. Finally he sold and worked out for awhile. He mined and hauled coal at Spring Creek and later moved to Grande Prairie.

In 1938 Mother sold the farm after Father died. She built a small house in town. Chester lived with her until she died in 1946. He did draying with horses and later did delivery work with car or truck for stores. He lived in this same house until he went to hospital where he died October 1978. He never married.

He was a member of the Salvation Army. He used his horses and cars to give rides to everybody.

The John Wagar Family

John, son of Margaret and Sherman Wagar, still has the well drill on his farm south of Wembley that his father used for many years. John is one of the oldest farmers in the district. He has seen many changes since 1929 when the land was first purchased. Most of his land was cleared by hand and broken by himself with a steel wheeled Allis Chalmers tractor.

In 1940 he married Herta Schmidt and their first home was a one room log building. In 1943 their daughter Lois was born. She started school in 1950 in an old log cabin that was built by A.K. Watts for the first Pipestone Creek School some 12 years earlier. Later it was used as a teacherage and another school was moved here from Buffalo Lakes. In 1959 the school closed and the children were taken by bus to Wembley. Later on, John bought the school and moved it on his farm where it is still used as a workshop.

Lois is married to David McGregor they have three children and live in Kelowna, B.C.

The Gordon Wagner Family

by Gordon and Myrtle Wagner

I, Gordon M. Wagner, was born on a farm at Shellbrook, Saskatchewan on March 11, 1910, to Daniel and Lucy Wagner. When I was 16, I started working for the railway, on the Rabbit Lake line. I worked there for three years. By then, I was drinking so heavy, I knew I had to get away. My uncle, Howard Jewitt, was heading for the Peace River country, so in the fall of 1930 I came up by train with his wife, Aunt Liefa, and their daughter, Alice. My sister, Gladys, and her husband Harry Hodgson, were also homesteading in the same district, so I spent the winter between the two places.

In the spring of 1931, I went to work for Bill Belfrey in the Dimsdale district, for $25 a month. That summer I took a three week holiday, riding out to Nose Mountain with Johnny Wager and Johnny Edwards, neighbors of my uncle's. The trail was soft, and the going was tough, but that was the life! Took about five dollars worth of supplies each and came back with at least a third of it. Caught fish and lived off the land.

Got back and summer fallowed 300 acres for Belfrey who owned nine quarters of land. I helped him harvest and did the fall work.

That winter I batched with Jack Stephenson at Dimsdale until after Christmas and then worked with my brother-in-law, Harry, getting logs along the Wapiti to build a barn. When it came time for spring work, I went back to Belfrey's.

The following spring, A.K. Watts had opened the Pipestone Creek Store and needed someone to put in his crop, so I started working for him. When farm work slacked off in the fall, I left for Pinto Creek and spent the winter trapping, but was back farming for A.K. in the spring.

On July 11, 1935, I married Myrtle Cowell.

Our first home was a little shack over at Pipestone Creek where I went back to work for A.K. for the fall and winter. After harvesting was done, I hauled coal and groceries for him.

During the time I worked for A.K., I broke several horses for him. It was the same wherever I worked, horses and me got along well. For Belfrey, I had driven 12 horses together and it was a real change to get back to just four or two.

Don Noyes hired me once just because I could handle horses. He had two colts, one he had worked putting in the crop, the other he wanted broke. So I used them to hay with. Got the haying done without mishap, too.

My saddle horse, Kit, was kind of a phantom. She was a grey, "the little brown-eyed grey", as Len Gibbons used to say. Sometimes we got into a lot of trouble because we could cross fences where no one else could. I would



Barbara, Larry, Myrna and Gordon Wagner, 1951.

pull out a fencepost and sit on it to hold it about knee high. Then I would lift Kit's feet over one by one, set the post back in and we'd be away.

In the spring of 1936, I left the Peace River country and took the last available homestead in the Didsbury, Alberta area. That was where our family was raised. Barbara was born in 1938, Myrna in 1942 and Larry in 1943. We stayed there for 21 years. I sold the homestead and bought a quarter in the Fallentimber Valley, and sold that. Then I bought a half section near the Graham school (for two steers and $20) where we raised cattle. Most of this time I also worked for the Department of Highways.

1957 brought us back north. I bought the S½ 13-70-8-W6 at Pipestone Creek from Vic Elford, and three houses in Grande Prairie. I farmed on weekends and worked for the Department of Highways as a graderman for the next 12 years.

That was before too many hardsurfaced roads were around. I operated a grader around Fox Creek, Dunvegan, the B.C. border, South Wapiti and Triangle. In 1967, I changed from maintaining roads to spreading asphalt until 1972, when I retired. I sold my land to Don MacAlister in 1974.

Our kids are all married now. Barbara married Jim Coombes and they live in Breton, Alberta. They have three children, Debbie, Linda and Russell. Debbie is married to Al Bowman and they have a little girl, Sandra. Linda is married to Robert Thring.

Our daughter, Myrna married Joe Calkins and they live at Rocky Mountain House with son Jeffie.

Our son, Larry, married Lana White and they live in Clairmont, Alberta. They had two children, Bobbie and Roxann. Bobbie was taken away from us in a snowmobile accident on December 24, 1974.

Myrtle and I are spending our retirement in the new home we built on 105th Avenue, Grande Prairie, Alberta.

They say a rolling stone gathers no moss, but I moved plenty.



Myrtle and Gordon Wagner, 1952.

The Alan Kingsford Watts Family

by Selina V.C. Watts

Alan K. Watts was born in Folkestone, England, the son of Henry Walter and Charlotte Watts, on the 17th of September, 1898. He left Dover College at the age of 15 years to join the army. As he was under age he was soon dismissed but tried again the next year and was assigned to the East Surrey Regiment. After serving in Italy and France he was invalided out after being gassed and buried.

During the following years he travelled to Canada and then to South Africa, a three month's voyage on a sailing ship. He then worked on a large estate in Rhodesia where he came down with enteric fever and was shipped to England, broke, having been robbed of all his earnings while in hospital.

In 1921 he came to Canada, and after selling antiques in Ottawa for a few months, made his way west. In Edmonton he met an old army acquaintance, Major Watts (no relation) from Grande Prairie, who persuaded him to come up to the Peace River Country. He worked on George Jebb's farm and later was janitor at the old Grande Prairie Hospital.

The next year he took up a homestead, E½ 14-70-8-W6 on the banks of the Pipestone Creek and Wapiti River.

I, Selina V.C. Watts, was born on the 6th of September, 1899 in Negapatam, Madras, South India, to William Charles and Maude Alice Cave-Browne. At the age of eight, I was taken to England for schooling. During the war of 1914 I worked in a bank and later in a boy's school in Folkestone. There I met "A.K.", as Alan was called. In 1922, my mother and Joyce, my sister, and I came to Grande Prairie and the following year, A.K. and I were married in Christ Church Anglican, Grande Prairie.

Our first home was a small abandoned log shack, with tar paper roof and mud floor, on the next quarter to ours. Our only furniture consisted of an old bed spring supported by four log legs, an old stove, a table and two chairs. A long shelf along the wall and many apple boxes served as a kitchen cupboard.

A slough nearby was handy to dig a well in, and it supplied us with rather earthy water. Later on we used river water to drink and put up ice from there. We were lucky enough to have our own log house built before winter, though at first only with a mud roof which helped keep us warm in winter and cool (but sometimes wet) in summer. When it rained, all available pots and pans were under the drips and a tent was put over the bed. Later, when we had a piano, a carpet was used to cover that in the rain.

One could almost live off the land with a garden, and wild strawberries, raspberries, currants, saskatoons, cranberries and mushrooms growing all around. As the land was broken up these things disappeared, as did the patches of peavine and vetch and other grasses which grew nearly waist high in places, and provided so much feed for the stock.

Our first grain crop was off a small ten acre field and the grain (oats) was stored in the house as we hadn't any granary or barn as yet. It took up half our bedroom! Our livestock consisted of a team of horses, a saddle horse who wandered off and was lost, and two milk cows who lived in a neighbor's pasture, an old sow with a litter, and some chickens who roosted in the trees nearby.

In 1924 the railway came west from Grande Prairie to Wembley and during that winter Alan stayed in Wembley

and worked on some of the buildings. He stayed there all week and returned to the farm for the weekends and I used to drive him back to work with the team on Sunday evening.

By now we had a few sheep which soon became a flock of 40 head. We disposed of them later, when we opened a store.

At this time we found that our small crop was not sufficient to feed us and the stock, so Alan cut firewood and hauled it to Dimsdale or Wembley in the winters, getting $2.50 a load. It took a day to cut and another day to haul it. One could get a few groceries for that amount and if you had a few eggs to sell for 15¢ a dozen, that helped.

In the early days one had to do so much without government help but by helping one another you really got to know your friends and neighbors. Often there were 'bees', where, if anyone was short of help to build, or needed help for other jobs, the neighbors would come and give a hand. Later on you could repay them in kind. Money was scarce so there was a lot of trading done among us.

In 1926 we built a barn and were able to feel more like farmers. By now our house was partitioned into a bedroom and kitchen and later on we were able to get a shingled roof. No more need for pots and pans under the drips!

In 1927 our daughter, Patricia Sela, was born and in 1931 another girl, Joan Genille (known as Billi) joined us. Our house was getting small for our growing family so we had to build on another room, which was later used as the store and post office. We opened the store on April 1, 1933, and named it Pipestone Creek Cash Store.



The Watts family in 1939. A.K., Pat, Sela and Billi.

There were many homesteaders across the river by this time and it saved them many hours and long miles to deal with us. We only carried the bare necessities at that time, but later carried dry goods and became a general store. We did a lot of business with the Indians with whom we traded groceries for their furs and moosehide goods.



A.K. Watts with Punch and Judy, in front of the first Pipestone Creek Store, in 1936.

For many years we were able to dispose of moosehide jackets, mitts, moccasins, and gloves, also hides and raw furs to Mr. Luxton of Banff, who had a small store but did a big trade with tourists. Many of the things we provided to him were the best genuine Indian goods he could get.

I should mention here that the old Indian trail from Jasper to the Hudson Bay Post at Lake Saskatoon passed through our place and once or twice a year the Indians used to travel this trail to go to the Post, and also to get their treaty money. It made a big day with Indian officials and R.C.M.P. in their scarlet uniforms.

The Indians had a stopping place down on the bank of the Wapiti and one could see many decorated wigwams among the less elaborate ones. Tea dances used to be the order of the day and many nights of merriment went on during these get-togethers. Many dogs and tomtoms kept us awake. It was a pity when these days passed. All one can see down there now is an old Indian graveyard. This graveyard has been looked after and can be seen at the confluence of the Pipestone Creek and Wapiti River.

Our post office had two mails a week after a few years, and we took the outgoing mail into Wembley on Tuesday and brought back the incoming mail. On Saturdays the postmaster from the South Wapiti Post Office was the mailman for us, taking and bringing back both ours and his. These days were extra busy for us as it meant quite a social gathering, the women waiting in my kitchen drinking tea and many times the men playing ball outside with the kids, or gossiping in the store while they waited for the mail.

In 1928 the 'Van Girls' started to visit the district. The first two to come were English girls, Eva Hasell and Iris Sayle. They came in their self-contained camper, under the auspices of the Anglican Church, to teach something of Christian religion to the many children living in the outlying districts who had little chance of going to church or Sunday School. The children looked forward to these yearly visits where they read, drew and acted out many of the Bible stories, also held church services in which the parents could join. These girls helped many of the children to get medical or dental advice and attention as needed. Money was short and they also provided clothing and many other things.

In the early 1930's we started to have church services in our kitchen and later in the school, until a church, St. Matthews, was moved here from Wembley in 1943 and was put on the site of our old house. The residing minister of the Anglican Church in Wembley used to come twice a month. Some of them were the Reverends Soverign, Pierce, Strachan, Eric Wright, Sandercock, Tom Wright, Currie, Ash, Pinkerton, Robertson, Meakin, Bush and Folliott.

In 1934 Alan made his first trip across the Wapiti into the bush with packhorses and Pete Shuttler as guide, with groceries and dry goods to trade to the Indians for fur, moosehides and moosehide articles.

The next year our neighbor, Marion Sanders, built a small log cabin and furnished it with a counter and shelves for a store on the Porcupine River. Dan St. Arnault looked after the pack horses. He and Alan would go out, unpack the goods, Alan would stay out there and Dan would return with the fur and moosehide goods and take more supplies out there as needed. These trips would be made in the wintertime, during which time I would be alone looking after the store.

Our house burned down in 1937. At the time, no one was at home. We thought that a spark from a crack in the brick chimney in the attic had started it. We lost nearly everything in the house and store. In a large log building we had built as a warehouse, we started up again, turning one end of the building into the store and living at the other end. How grateful I was that our piano was in the barn loft at the time of the fire. It had been moved there for a community social event.

In our new house (after the fire), we built a cistern under the porch to catch rainwater from the roof. If it didn't rain enough we had to haul from the river in a wooden tank drawn by horses before we had a truck. Our cookstove with water front attached to a barrel beside it, provided enough hot water. Later on, we installed proper plumbing.

In the Millarston district, along the Wapiti, there was a coalmine and we used to buy coal for $4 a ton and haul it into Grande Prairie to trade at the wholesalers for groceries and hardware. As we had year round help now, this was a winter's job when the farming was not so busy. We had a sleigh box with caboose at the front for the driver and four horses to pull the rig. This outfit was used to bring supplies to the store, too. Later, we got a second-hand Ford car which we converted into a small truck and could haul our groceries with that.

During World War II so many of the boys joined up and went overseas, also some of the older men and veterans of World War I. Only one of our young men never came back, that was Lawrence Osborne. Alan joined up and though he never went overseas he was stationed in Calgary, Camrose, Red Deer and Grande Prairie as an instructor. There were only the women and children with a few older men left to carry on at home and life slowed down. I ran the store alone with help from the girls when they weren't in school.

Our barn was used for dances which were very well attended. As there was no heating in it of course we had to have them in the warm weather. Sometimes we had a large bonfire out in the yard which could be seen for miles. Some of the dances were in aid of the Monkman Pass and Milk for Britain Fund. Later on we gave up having them because the vandalism got so bad.

When elections came along, we had meetings up in the barn and on Polling Day, we turned our small teacherage into a polling booth.

Some excitements that befell us during the war years were fires. One was when our little school was very close to a bush fire which spread from the muskeg, the fire advancing to the edge of the field where the school was. The kids moved all the desks out into the field and we went round with sacks soaked in water putting the flames out as they advanced in the grass. Luckily the wind changed before it did any harm. Our buildings about a quarter mile away were not in the way of it, luckily.

The next fire was a big one across the river. As there were no fire fighters then, most of the men being in the army, it spread through the bush quickly. The settlements across the river were safe but the bush burnt right down to the water's edge just across from the ferry in places. For two weeks there was so much smoke that we never saw the sun. We had had a very hot dry spell. People used to come out from town at nights to see the display of firewors on the other side as the trees cracked off and fell. Only one small patch on this side of the river caught fire, though sparks and ashes came over our yard. For many nights I went to bed wondering if we'd be next. I kept a suitcase with post office and store money packed beside me in case.

During the war a coalmine was opened up on the Pinto Creek across the river but it didn't stay open for long. After the war things changed rapidly.

Lumber camps opened up. Hystad's lumber was brought out to Wembley and Dimsdale where they had lumber yards on the railway. At times when the roads were blocked with snow our yard was a miniature lumber yard, some loads even being dumped beside the road at the top of the river hill. The store was handy for the haulers to stop for some little thing as they passed through on the way to Dimsdale or Wembley.

Our private life quietened down when the girls were away boarding in Grande Prairie going to school. My mother, known as Mrs. C-B, who lived with us for sometime, died in 1949.

In 1945 Pat taught at Ravenna School just across the Smoky River for a year. In 1947 she married Keith Gerow and they lived for a short while on his land across the Wapiti, later moving into Grande Prairie to work at the lumber mill. Now they live in Salmon Arm, B.C. Their five sons, Rod, Don, Terry, Randy and Cam are all working there also.

In 1949 Joan (Billi) married Iain MacAlister and they lived on his farm in Millarston, where they raised two sons and a daughter, Larry, Rob and Vicki.

In 1957 Alan died and I carried on at the store for six more years. Business was slowing down and I knew that this little store had had its day.

Allan Gerow and wife, Flo, and children, Gloria, Butch, Patsy, Donna and Lyn, looked after the farm till I sold everything and came into Grande Prairie in 1963. They moved to Fort St. John.

A.K. was a very outgoing man, never afraid to tackle something new, full of ideas and very determined. Life was never dull with him. Pipestone Creek is very dear to me and I shall never regret the years spent there, where the happiest memories of my life are.

The David Whyte Family

by Jean Wood

Mr. and Mrs. David Whyte immigrated from Scotland to Canada in March, 1929. They travelled by train across Canada from St. Johns, New Brunswick, with their large family, stopping off at several immigration halls along the way till they reached Wembley, which was the end of the steel. Unfortunately for them, Canada was entering the period we refer to as the Hungry Thirties. However, their philosophy was to learn the customs of their new homeland. They settled on what was known as a Soldier Settlement Farm three miles southwest of Wembley. The

older children went to work at various jobs locally and the younger ones went to school in the Wembley area.

After two years of unsuccessful farming and poor prices for grain, they moved to the Pipestone Creek area to a homestead. The family, with the help of neighbors, built a log house, and started breaking land. The younger children attended the Millarston School until Pipestone Creek decided to build a school in their area. The older children by this time were married. Mr. Whyte worked in the mines at Millarston and Dimsdale. He was foreman for the Schnieder mine and also foreman for the Tissington mine. John Whyte, his younger son, carried on the farming while his father was engaged in the mining activities.

Mr. Whyte finally had to retire from mining due to health problems. For several years he drove the Pipestone Creek School van to Millarston, first using his grey team and wagon or covered sleigh, later using a car. By this time the younger family were married, and Mr. and Mrs. Whyte moved to Grande Prairie, and lived with their daughter, Mrs. Margaret Sorenson. Mrs. Whyte's health was very poor, yet she led quite an active life in the farming areas. She was a midwife and attended several births helping Dr. A.M. Carlisle. Mrs. Whyte was noted for her hospitality. Anyone dropping in to the Whyte home never left without tea and Scottish scones. Mrs. Whyte passed away after a lengthy illness and Mr. Whyte lived in Grande Prairie sometime alone, as Mrs. Sorenson worked in the mills with her husband. Mr. Whyte was a faithful church attender and passed away one Sunday night on his way to church.



A gathering at the Whyte's home including Hazel Robertson and son, Jean Wood, Charlie Jobson, Mary Kennaway, David Whyte Jr., George Whyte, Nancy Wood, Joan Watts, Edna Wood, Bill Loskill, Roy Robertson, Mrs. Whyte, David Whyte Sr., Mrs. Jobson, Charlie Pigeon, John Whyte.



Ed Wood, Mrs. Whyte, David Whyte Jr., David Whyte Sr.

The family consisted of Mrs. Ed Wood (Jean), who has three children; Mrs. Sorenson (Margaret); George Whyte; Matt Whyte (Matthew), four children; Mrs. McCullough (widow) later Mrs. Brush (Agnes) four children; John Whyte; David Whyte, five children; Mrs. Edlund (Janet) five children; Mrs. Kennway (Mary) four children. This makes a total of nine children for Mr. and Mrs. Whyte, and 25 grandchildren.

C.A. (Dad) Williams

by Frank Stoll

C.A. (Dad) Williams was born January 8, 1856, and died September 5, 1931. He came to the Lake Saskatoon area about 1915 and started raising sheep. The coyotes were quite bad, so he purchased a billy goat to protect the sheep, which was quite successful.

He was lured to the area on the Wapiti by Van Horne's sawmill. Being a river-rat, he was hired to run the logs down the Wapiti to a boom waiting for them at Pipestone Creek. He was an expert swimmer, which stood him in good stead as he got many duckings freeing stray logs with his pikepole. I can remember, as a lad, sitting on the edge of the sawdust pile, which extended into the river catching, grayling, under the maize of tracks made of wood and leading out from the mill to the various lumber piles, and the little old trail leading up the bank across the bush and prairie to Lake Saskatoon.

In later years, "Dad" Williams gave up his homestead to Jean Klein, a trapper friend, and relocated on the NE 28-70-8-6, where he built a cabin and barn, cleared 40 acres and proved up. A few years later, he purchased the S½ 34-70-8-6, at a tax sale, moved a house, bought from Moose Nellis in Grande Prairie, to this property, and lived and farmed there until 1931, when he became the first ferryman on the Wapiti River.

One of my recollections of "Dad" Williams, was his elation at getting this Government job. His happiness was shortlived, however, and he was taken ill, hospitalized and died on September 5, 1931. He worked as a clerk part-time in the Bromley Hardware at Wembley, and was a brother of Lake Saskatoon Masonic Lodge No. 106. He spent a lot of time at the George Stoll and Norman Talbot farms. He was a great lover of nature, and trapper, and taught my brother and myself, on numerous camptrips, to appreciate the great outdoors. He is buried in the Lake Saskatoon cemetery.



Dad Williams with moose horns circa - 1915-1923.

The Ed Wood Family

by Jean Wood

Edgar Wood was born in Hanwell, England, on March 8, 1887. As his father died when he was young, and his mother had several children to raise, he and his brother went to a Bernardo Home. When he was five, he was sent to a foster home in Canada as the practise was with many Bernardo children.

Ed first came to the Peace River Country just before World War I as his brother, Charley, was here at that time. Then war broke out and Ed joined up and went overseas.

He returned to the Peace River Country after being wounded in Europe, and filed on a homestead in the Pipestone Creek district in May, 1921. He was able to get two quarters, one a homestead and the other a soldier's grant, E½ 13-70-8-W6. In 1934 he cancelled the north quarter and it was taken by his father-in-law, David Whyte.

Sometime after getting the homestead, Ed went into partnership in a farming venture with a man who was sick and wanted to spend his remaining years in Arizona. This farm was four miles south of Wembley (SE 3-71-8-W6) and it was here that Ed brought me, his bride, to begin our married life.

I, Jean Rainey Whyte, was born in Bathgate, Scotland, February 14, 1910. I came to Canada with my family in 1929. We came directly to the end of steel in the Peace River Country, arriving in Wembley on April 16. While my parents and brothers and sisters took up farming, I went right to work helping at the home of the Boyd Johnston's.

I continued working there until August 1, 1929, when Ed and I were married. The ceremony took place at my parent's home near Wembley, with the Reverend Simons officiating. Bill Watson and his sister, Agnes, were our witnesses.

Ed and I moved into our first home on the farm south of Wembley and it was there our first daughter, Agnes Emily (Nancy) was born on May 28, 1930.



Jean and Ed Wood at Banff.



The Wood Family in the 1950's.
Back row: Jean and Ed.
Centre: Edna and Margaret.
Bottom step: Ralph, Nancy and Brian Eng.
On the ground: Tony and Kathryn Kuhn.

Farming with an absent and sickly partner did not prove to be a satisfactory venture, so about two years later, we moved to our homestead at Pipestone Creek.

Another daughter, Edna Jean, arrived to bless our home on April 3, 1934.

I remember these years on the homestead as good, though not easy years. We always had a big garden, and I put away a good supply of vegetables and wild berries for winter food every year. I even canned milk so we would have some when Bossy was dry. I wrote to the University of Alberta to find out how to do it properly.

Ed raised a few cattle and hogs, as well as going to work on the road with his team and fresno. (I recall that A.K.Watts was instrumental in getting Ed the road job, as for many other homesteaders.) Ed had a small war pension ($17.25), too, which seemed a big amount in those days and was the blessing that kept us from having to apply for "relief", as government aid was called then.

Life was fairly simple, with times of hard work, but times of fun and sociability, too. People visited a lot, driving the miles with horses and wagons or sleighs. We had a Ford coupe when we were first married but found it was too expensive to run and as the roads were hardly ever in good condition for a car, we retired it and settled for Trixie and Patsy, a very lively little team. There was seldom a week when Trixie didn't take the bit in her mouth and stage a runaway.

I always got home with them, just the same. I often gloated over this fact after the time when they ran away with Ed, and he had to come home without them, leaving the sleigh and harness in a tangled mess over in the Millarston school yard.

Social life included dances at homes and later in the Millarston school to the northeast of us. Ed, on his violin, often joined other musicians to provide the music. There were also Women's Institution meetings at Millarston and Anglican church services at Watts' or later at the Pipestone Creek School. The Wood, Whyte, Watson and Watts families who attended these services most regularly were known as "the Faithful W's".

Our association with the Anglican Church came about through the Anglican Sunday School Van girls who visited rural homes during the summer, and organized a Sunday School by Post for children. I remember looking forward to their visits, and credit them with providing an early religious training for many children, including ours.

About this time, I took over the job of correspondent for the "Along the Wapiti" column in the Northern Tribune. (It had been started by J.C. Maclean.) A.K. Watts had also started to write a Pipestone Creek news column when he opened the store. The two columns, written by neighbors, were often vehicles for fun and friendly rivalry.

In 1936, Nancy was ready to begin school, but there was no school nearer than three and a half miles away, so it was decided to board her with neighbors. She went to live with the Hawkes family who lived just across the road from the Millarston school. Two years later, the Pipestone Creek School was opened, and it being closer, and Nancy now being older and having neighbors to walk to school with, she switched to Pipestone. In 1940, sister Edna was ready for school, too.

By this time we had moved to the hamlet of Pipestone Creek to run the farm for A.K. and Mrs. Watts. A.K. had joined the army, leaving Mrs. Watts to run the store.

It was while living here that another daughter, Margaret Rose, was born, on April 8, 1941. Later that year, the girls and I moved back to the homestead while Ed joined the Expeditionary Force surveying the Alaska Highway. Then in the spring of 1942, Ed was appointed ferryman on the Wapiti south of Wembley. Ferry life was exciting but tough, Ed being on call around the clock during the operating season. We stayed on at the ferry until sometime in the 50's, at which time Ed's health (he had diabetes and haemaphilia) necessitated us retiring to Grande Prairie.

Retiring did not mean stopping work, it just meant a change. Ed was janitor at the United Church, and caretaker of the jail inmates, until such time as he became unable to get around prior to his death, on November 22, 1968.

I found lots to do in my new town life, too. I became involved with many volunteer services through the Legion, the Salvation Army and the United Way, as well as hospital visiting. I have a number of certificates commending me for this work as well as a plaque for volunteer work over the years, which was presented to me in 1979.

Nancy took her schooling at Pipestone Creek, Millarston and Grande Prairie High School, and went on to get a degree in education at the University of Alberta. She married Ralph Eng of South Wapiti in 1950. They have two sons, Brian and Marvin. Nancy taught at various schools in Alberta for 16 years, lastly in Calgary. She was also very active politically, becoming president of the New Democratic Party for three years. Nancy died of cancer in 1978.

Edna got her education at Pipestone Creek, Millarston and Grande Prairie High School. In 1960 she married Tony Kuhn and they have two daughters, Kathryn (married to Edgar Dobie of Vernon) and Carol. Edna and Tony lost a son, Elwood, when he was young. They now live in Vernon, B.C., where Edna manages a department at the Bay.

Margaret went to school at Pipestone Creek and Grande Prairie. In 1961, she married Charles Bell, an American airman, and moved to the U.S.A. It was there her two children, Bonnie Jean and Tom, were born. Margaret now lives in Sacramento, California, and is married to Jim Russell.

I look back on homesteading years as the best years of my life. It was a good time to raise a family in a simple and wholesome way. I credit Dr. Carlisle, who brought many a Peace Country resident into the world, as the greatest help in that task.

Saw Milling



The VanHorne sawmill along the Wapiti near the mouth of the Pipestone Creek, 1915-23.



Fred Bobeng hauling lumber about 1915 - 1923.



The mill yard at VanHorne's Sawmill, 1915-23.



Ed Sundin, Eric and Carl Berg hauling logs to their small mill in 1929.



Bucking logs at Hystad's Mill. Alex Cameron & Gus Samstead.



Hauling lumber up Spring Creek Hill Bob Cameron and Jim Tissington.



Sawmill on the Wapiti.

Chapter 11: South Wapiti



The South Wapiti Community Hall:

During the first few years, up until 1952, all the entertainments of the community, such as dances, concerts, card parties etc. were held in the school house. In March of 1952 a meeting was held to see about obtaining a building from the Hystad Brothers, that would be suitable for a hall. They had a sawmill in the area south of the community and as they had finished their berth, had no more use for the buildings. The community bought the cook house.

On April 1, some of the men went up and started taking the building apart by sawing it into panels. Ryans had a truck so Mick took it to haul the panels out to the south east corner of Ted Day's quarter, SE 17-69-8-W6. It took a couple of days to haul it all out.

In June the men of the district began putting the building together again. The women took picnic lunches up to the men when they worked. By June 27, they had it finished and on July 2, the first dance was held.



First picnic in South Wapiti in 1931 at Bill Mercer's place. L. to R. Mrs. Troyer, Marie Brooks, Ethel Rutledge, Bill Mercer, Mrs. Mercer, Sarah Penny, Crystal Brooks, Myrtle Eng, Ethelyn Brooks, Mrs. Ed Sundin. The two boys in front are Norman and Ralph Eng.

The first year it was pretty rough inside but plywood was bought and it was soon lined up with plywood. A large barrel wood heater was used for heat and gasoline lanterns for light. The women used a coal oil stove for boiling coffee for the different entertainments as there was no electricity.

Several wedding dances were held in the new hall. The first one was Alphons and Lois Lofstrom's on August 8, 1952, with the Hawkes orchestra playing.

Michael and Margaret Ryan held their wedding dance on June 23, 1955, with George Boe, Fred Mason and Clarence Sjerdal playing. Mary and Sandy Crichton were married on December 31, 1957 and had their dance in conjunction with the New Year's Eve dance.

George and Annette Day had their wedding dance on July 31, 1959 and the Hawkes orchestra played for them.

Mrs. Comeau, Albin Jacobson and Doreen Miller played for Dave and Melba Schenk on November 11, 1960.

Charlie Silverthorne played for several dances by himself playing the mouth organ, the drums and either the violin or the guitar all at once. Harvey Houle often played the violin along with other orchestras.

The forestry held several picture shows in the hall but would have to bring their own power plant along to run the shows.

One of the last dances to be held there was Joyce and Mansell Koll's wedding dance on October 30, 1964.

The young people began going to dances in other communities after there were more cars available to them and it became harder to get music to play for dances without the electricity for amplifiers. Other places had better floors as well so the dances etc. quit in the old hall.

The hall is no longer usable as in the spring of 1979 the roof caved in after a heavy snow fall.

South Wapiti School

The South Wapiti School District No. 4623 was formed in 1933 and got its name because it was the first school district formed south of the Wapiti River. The first trustees were John Isberg, Carl Berg and Findlay Watson. The chairman of the first board was Findlay Watson and the first secretary treasurer was Herb Riggs.

The school was constructed of logs cut, hauled and erected by ratepayers of the district. A tax of $10 per quarter was voted on by the school board for building the school, and each ratepayer was to have the privilege of working off this tax at 12½ cents per hour. This included all work done on the logs. Carl Berg was voted in as foreman of the job and before the job was completed he resigned and John Isberg was voted in. The ratepayers who worked on the school included Carl Berg, John Isberg, John and Ed Sundin, Clarence Troyer, Eric Berg, Henry McCullough, Morris and Alphons Lofstrom as well as others.

The school was built on the north east corner of 8-69-8-W6, the balance of the quarter later belonging to Nels Remington.

In May of 1935 the school opened for the first time with Miss Harkness of Vegreville being the first teacher. Among the first pupils were the Troyers, Isbergs, Roy Sundin, Johnny Kitson and the beginners, Audrey Sutherland and Jack Riggs.



1936 - Pupils in the school.
Left desk: John Kitson, Alice Gerow.
Front: Audrey Sutherland, Yvonne Elliott.
Right: Lyle Gerow, Lloyd Gerow.
Front: Jack Riggs, June Riggs, Olive Gerow.

This school was operated as a summer school for two seasons by Mr. A. Dormer of Calgary, as the gas drum stove couldn't keep the school warm enough. In winter you would toast on the side next to the stove and frost on the other. The cracks in the floor were wide enough for the two beginners to stick the little pink A.B.C. cards down through them.

Mr. Arthur Kitson was secretary-treasurer for awhile and I remember one summer when he had to go around the district to collect enough money to pay the teacher's wages.

The next four terms were taught by Miss Gladys Moores, of Coleman, Alberta, beginning in September 1938. Pupils registered that year were; Jack and June Riggs, Yvonne Elliott, Audrey Sutherland, Lyle, Olive and Alice Gerow and Roy Sundin. More pupils were added each year as the children got old enough and other settlers came into the district. These included the Elfords,



1936 - School picnic South Wapiti.
Back row in tree L - R Anton Berg, John Kitson.
Centre: Mr. Kitson, Mrs. Kitson, Lloyd Gerow, Mary Sutherland holding Muriel, Frannie Riggs, Margaret Elliott holding Joan, Mrs. Gerow, Alice Gerow, Mr. Gerow, Mr. Dormer (teacher), Mrs. Berg.
Front: Lyle Gerow, Yvonne Elliott, June Riggs, Olive Gerow, Jack Riggs, Audrey Sutherland.

Muriel Sutherland, the Van Schaicks, Days and the two Ryan families.

When they played ball, it was usually students from the East against the students from the West. The East usually had fewer players but they had Lyle Gerow who could hit the ball farther than anyone else so they didn't feel deprived.

When Miss Moores was teaching, she and Miss Violet Sundin used to conduct a Sunday School class, Thursday afternoon after the last recess in the summer time. Miss Moores used to take the older grades and Miss Sundin the lower ones. They would sit out under the trees and have classes. This was only for a couple of years, Miss Sundin was a retired school teacher and she really enjoyed being back with a group of children.

Miss Belle Wallace taught the term of 1942 and 1943, then Mrs. Anna Day taught for the next nine terms except towards the last when she had to have substitutes because of poor health.

During the war years Mrs. Day conducted a Junior Red Cross Club and the children collected automobile tires and scraps of iron and aluminum for the war effort.

Muriel Sutherland and May Ryan each put in a term of supervising the school after Mrs. Day.

The district became a part of the Grande Prairie School Division No. 14 in 1938 and remained in the division until the County of Grande Prairie was established in January, 1951. The South Wapiti School District was then excluded from the county and operated as an Independent District. From then on we had official trustees to help run the business, these included Mr. Stan Hambley, Mr. Harold Mac Neil, Mr. Riddle and Mr. Toews.

After Herb Riggs and Arthur Kitson, Clay Brooks was put in as secretary for a few terms, then in 1949 Mrs. Nora Ryan was voted in and kept the position for 13 years.

In 1954 a new school was built and the old school was sold by auction to Alphons Lofstrom for the sum of $50 and is now used on his farm as a shop.

Mr. Joe Stevenson from Raymond, Alberta, taught the first two terms in the new school. Mr. Stevenson had just one arm, due to an accident when he was a youngster. The school children, at first took pity on him while playing ball, but soon found out he was as good with one arm



South Wapiti school children about 1949.
Back row: Leola Day, Patricia Van Schaick, Edna Wood, Irene Van Schaick, and Walter Ryan.
Middle row: Mona Pearson, Irene Ryan, Joan Elliott, May Ryan, Muriel Sutherland, Douglas Van Schaick and Mick Ryan.
Front row: Bunny Day, Joyce Ryan, Ruth Ryan, Bobby Ryan, Gerald Ryan and George Day.

as they were with two. He did not teach grade nine, so in his second year, Joyce Ryan and Lloyd Lofstrom had to go to Grande Prairie. They were reimbursed for part of their room and board.

The next to teach were Connie Miller from Wembley, Violet Nichol also from Wembley, Mrs. Barker from Edson, Mr. Adair from Grande Prairie for two terms, then finally in the last term for the school in 1961/62, Elke Egge from Woking.

In December 1962 the South Wapiti District joined the Northland School Division, which was in favor of centralization with Grovedale School District No. 4910 so the children were bussed there, with the high school students taken on to Grande Prairie.

The Christmas concert was a yearly high-light. From the end of November on, the time after the last recess was devoted to concert practise. All the pupils took part in one way or another, all joining in singing the carols.

In the fall the Ladies' Club put on either a pie or box social to raise enough money to order gifts through Eatons. The teacher sent in the names and ages of each child on the register as well as the pre-schoolers. There was always a sack of candy and nuts for Santa to give out, too.

As there was no well on the school grounds, tenders were put out each winter for river ice to be put up for drinking water, also tenders for ten cords of wood, cut into lengths for the heater and piled. After the new school was built a Booker heater was put in and coal used. They didn't need ice any more either then as Mr. Remington had a drilled well on his place and the children carried water from the well for drinking.

There was a teacherage in the school yard for any teachers who wanted to use it. This little house had been the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ole Berg after their daughter Anna and her husband, Ted Day, and family came to take over the farm.

In 1947 there were 18 pupils attending school and there were eight saddle horses there most days in the summer. In winter the children that were some distance from school used a team and sleigh and picked up the other children on their way.

The last pupils to go to the South Wapiti school were the following; Mark Day, Brian Lofstrom, Edna Lofstrom, Jim Lofstrom, Yvonne, Laverne, Larry, Arthur, Raymond and Jim McCullough, Barbara, Leona, and Donald Ryan, John Galon, Avis McClung, Fred Berg, Joanne, Janet and Denise Blackbourn, Violet, Edna and Gloria Moberly, Lorraine Lofstrom and Kenneth McCullough.

Anton Berg

I left Kinistino, Saskatchewan, in the fall of 1929, with my dad, Ole Berg and Uncle Carl Berg, and came to Wembley. We went across the Wapiti, south of Wembley and took homesteads. There wasn't any ferry at the time so crossed the river in a row boat and walked from there. Dad filed on SE 17-69-8-W6, and I filed on NE 17-69-8-W6, Carl filed on the SW 17-69-8-W6. We worked on the hill that fall so we could get up it with the team and sleigh as there was only a pack trail up it to start with and it was very steep in places.

I worked for the first five years in the spring and fall for Mr. Stokke, out near Wembley, and in the winter I went trapping.

Dad got a house built and moved the family up in 1933. Brother Hans took a homestead on SE 7-69-8-W6. Later he sold it to sister Betty and her husband Art Pearson. They lived there for awhile and then sold it to Gerald Ryan and they moved to B.C.

Anna and her husband, Ted Day, and family came up in 1942 and took over the farm from Dad and they wanted the half section all in one so I traded my quarter to them for Eric's, the NW 8-69-8-W6. I built a house there and on August 3, 1950 I married Freda Hammel, and on August 9, 1952 our son Fred was born. We lived on that quarter for several years and then sold it to Michael Ryan and bought the Rudolph Lemke homestead from Mr. Gerow, SE 9-69-8-W6 where we are still living. Fred works at the plywood plant in Grande Prairie and lives at home with us.



Arne Nelson, Anton Berg, Ole Berg and Carl Berg beside the truck that the Days came to the Wapiti in, in 1942.



Eric, Carl and Anton Berg hauling their cook stove home.

Carl Berg

by Nora and Edith Ryan

Carl Berg was born in Sweden in 1891 and came to Kinistino, Saskatchewan, with his family as a small boy.

He came to the South Wapiti district, south of Wembley, in 1928, along with others from Saskatchewan, looking for homesteads. He homesteaded on the SW 17-69-8-W6 which joined his brother Ole's on the west.

He worked on his homestead during the summer, brushing and breaking the land. In the spring and fall he went to work for farmers in the Wembley district, such as Henry and Wes Stokke, then later for Walter Roberts.

He was a good axe man and built several log cabins with the help of Jonas Lofstrom and John Isberg.



Carl Berg.

Later Carl and the neighbors built a mill and set it up on his place. They hauled logs there and sawed rough lumber for floors and roofs for their buildings. They also made shingles.

When forest fires broke out, Carl was hired by the forestry and put on as foreman over the fire fighters. He was also very active in community affairs and always enjoyed a good game of Norwegian whist.

After proving up his homestead he lived there until 1942, then sold it to Jim Ryan and moved to the SW 15-69-8-W6 on the hill east of the Post Office (at that time) which is still known as Carl's Hill, now owned by Sandy Crichton.

Carl was one of the first to have a car in the district and was often called on to take someone to town or even to the hospital.

He was everyone's friend and never hesitated to give help to anyone who needed it, including baby-sitting for the Ryan families when necessary. He spent most of his Christmas Days with us along with other bachelors of the district. He passed away September 3, 1953, and was sadly missed by all.

The Eric Berg Family

by Eric Berg

I'm Eric Berg, one of the first settlers of the South Wapiti district. The first ones, "Squatters", were my Uncle, Carl Berg and the father of Morris and Alphons Lofstrom whose name was Jonas Lofstrom. They were the two pioneers who got people interested in the district. They built cabins. Mine was built just south of Uncle Carl's place, Anton Berg and my Dad, Ole Berg were just east of Jonas Lofstroms and Carls, Morris and Alphons had cabins built. Edwin and John Sundin were among the first. The Brooks men came in, the Elfords, Ryans, etc. The first two came in 1928 and in 1929 the Government Surveyor came in and surveyed the land, many of us who had come from around where Jonas Lofstrom and Carl Berg had spent years of pioneering between Kinistino and Melfort Saskatchewan. I remember so well how we had a Threshing Machine in the Kinistino District and had to rush the last of threshing on an afternoon and my dad (Ole Berg), John Sundin, Eric Stranquist, and myself, started out the same night and in my converted Model T Ford, drove night and day over some of the most ungodly roads to get to Wembley in time to catch the surveyor to get our squatted homesteads registered. Only John Sundin and I could drive a car so it was some trip, no Highway 43 short cut as of today but we had to go north from High Prairie through Peace River Town and via the Dunvegan Ferry and come from the north to Grande Prairie and into Wembley.

The McCulloughs and Gerows also came from our area in Saskatchewan. The Gibbon's came in for a short while. Well we had all kinds of people, Jimmy (Squeaky) Thomson and John "Big Moose" Plaxton, the Isberg family, Clarence Troyers came in and settled just south of my place. They set up a Sunday School and Church in their home. We must not forget Dewey Koostra who after proving up on his homestead left for California. By the way Dewey, C. Troyer and I were the first ones who proved up on our homesteads. Mr. Troyer and I had been asked to go with Dewey to Peace River Town and after we had witnessed Dewey Koostra's time of residence etc. the land office fellow said, "Why don't you two sign up too and witness each others papers?" Dewey grumbled all the way home that he had driven us up there and got ours signed up too.

By the way, in 1967 we went to Fresno, California, to see if Dewey was still alive. I knew he had married a widow with several children. I found a Mrs. Rose Koostra listed and found she really was the one whom Dewey had



Eric Berg's little shack in 1930. This little shack is still there.

married. She told me that Dewey had been murdered and robbed five years previous.

Herb Riggs and his wife moved in. Then there were Engs, Asser Vickland. John Mickelson spent one winter and then went back to Saskatchewan and never came back. There had to be changes, Sutherlands took over the Koostra homestead, the Elliotts came in and settled and did much to improve the conditions. I believe I have left out the Mercers. They came in from Wembley and took a homestead.

I will always remember a joke she used to enjoy when she and Mr. Mercer went out to see how Uncle Carl and Jonas Lofstrom were getting along with their house (log of course). Mr. Lofstrom offered to cook a cup of coffee and they accepted. When they got the coffee it was real strong and she said to Jonas, "It surely is strong" and he said, "WHEN I MAKE COFFEE, I MAKE COFFEE AND WHEN I MAKE WATER, I MAKE WATER". She always laughed about that because she knew that he meant, when he made coffee he made coffee and when he was to drink water it was water.

My Uncle Carl seemed to be the one the Government depended on as a road foreman so he was always the road boss.

When he first arrived we had to raft across the Wapiti and then walk up the "Hogs Back". Most of our stuff was carried on our back and some was packed on a horse. We worked together to get sort of a trail up the Wapiti on the settler's side. Mr. Bert Osborne was a great help to our first homesteaders. The Government really helped greatly, considering it was depression times. They put in a real ferry but there were times at freeze up and Spring break up that was a very uncertain time to get across. I remember when Morris Lofstrom led his horse against the threat of any time the ice could break through and this time it did and Morris lost his horse and saddle. He found it a few days later washed up on shore a ways down the river. The homesteaders built a snake like trail up the hill and the Government paid for a little better one but there were times when we went over the road with HEART IN MOUTH AND TEETH IN POCKET.

Now to go to the settlement to see some of the activities. We had community picnics and had a better time than present times because folks mixed better. The women brought meat, salads, cakes, etc. We men, especially the younger ones, had formed a baseball team. We called ourselves "THE WAPITI WILD CATS" and there were times when we would walk all the way to Wembley, a distance of 17 miles one way, and play the Wembley Village team and walk back home after the game. We were tough walkers and worked on the homesteads all day as well. I'm sending you some snapshots of the Wapiti Wild Cats and other scenes.

We built a sawmill on Uncle Carl's place where we could cut rough lumber, had no planer, that had to be done by hand.



SOUTH WAPITI WILD CATS ball team
Back row: ? ?, Bert Osborne, Alphons Lofstrom, B. Aseltine, Carl Brooks, A. Heggstrom, Eric Berg.
Front: Tom Massey, Bud Goebel, Henry McCullough, Morris Lofstrom and Herb Riggs.



Ole and Mrs. Berg in front of their little house.

I planted the first Grimm Alfalfa and it was a great success and was the start of Alfalfa growing for seed in the district. That was documented at Beaverlodge, who were responsible to set the district to not grow any other alfalfa but Grimm Alfalfa, so it could be a pure seed district. I had a measured acre which I raked first with a horse rake and then by a hand rake. The alfalfa grew above my waist and it was a beautiful sight to see.

I also remember, although I was a bachelor, I pushed for a school and was elected to an office. The same night I walked non-stop to Grande Prairie, a distance of 40 miles in 35-40 below zero weather, to see the man in authority and got it under way. That was a 40 mile walk before breakfast. Left home at midnight and arrived in Grande Prairie at 10 a.m. next morning, had breakfast in a restaurant, did up the school business and caught the train to Wembley, and got a ride home with Herb Riggs to Wapiti. What a trip, but they got a school!

The roads were soon worked up along proper lines. Carl Berg was the foreman and we worked off our taxes.

My Sister and Ted Day and family moved in after I left the district. Mother died at 69 years of Cancer, in 1945. Anna was next in the family to go (of Cancer too) on February 23, 1953, at the age 49 years. Dad lived until March 4, 1954. He passed away at the age of 84 years.

I left the homestead in 1934 to further my education (belated) and spent 30 years in the ministry-Hythe, Alberta, Vermilion, Alberta, Abbotsford, B.C., Osoyoos, B.C. and Oliver, B.C. Since quitting the ministry I have managed a Senior Citizen's home, been several years in Real Estate, sold Rawleigh Products and was a Desk Clerk at a large Motel. I sold Rawleigh Products while on my last job on my days off. I'm retired now but there never seems to be any rest.

Clay Brooks

Clay was born in the United States, and later moved across the Wapiti. He farmed his land with horses and used to ride his saddle horse, Ruby, to visit the neighbors and get the mail.

He was secretary-treasurer for the school for many years.

He told Margaret Elliott about a good patch of low bush cranberries, when she went to pick them they turned out to be chicken berries.

In the late 1940's he moved into Elliott's yard. One evening Percy's team ran away with him. Percy wasn't hurt, just frightened. Clay asked him if he needed a change of underwear. He was a good neighbor and had a dry, witty sense of humor.

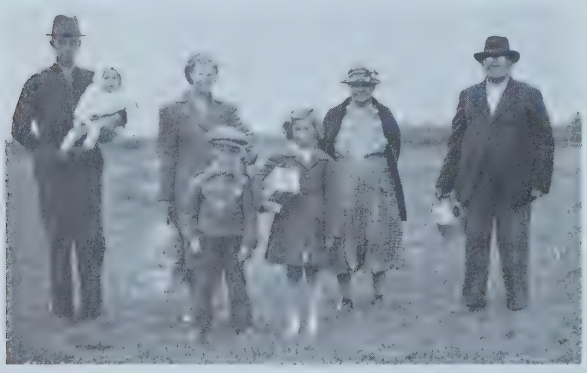
In the early 1950's he moved into Central Park Lodge, and lived there until his death. His remains were shipped back to the States to his daughter for burial.

The G.H. Days

by Leola Eyben (daughter)

My dad, Ted, as he was known by everyone, had promised my grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Ole Berg, when we visited them in 1938, that when they would like to retire, Dad would move up and buy the homestead from them.

Dad had worked for ten years for the Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting Company in Flin Flon, Manitoba. All of us children were born there. My sister Melba, known as Bunny, in 1941, George in 1937, and myself, Leola, in 1934.



Ted Day holding Bunny, Mrs. Day, Mrs. Ole Berg and Ole, George and Leola in front. 1942.

So, it was in the spring of 1942 and I believe it was an old Buick car that Dad had converted into a small truck, that we loaded as much as we could into it, and we headed out to South Wapiti. The rest of our stuff we shipped by train to Wembley.

We stayed overnight at Bert and Mima Osborne's and crossed the river the next day. I remember the McCulloughs at the top of the hill, had to pull us out of a bad corduroyed stretch of road, with a team of horses. We met Uncle Anton Berg shortly after, who had come to meet us with a team and wagon. It was a real experience for me to be able to ride back with him.

I finished my school year under Miss Gladys Moores. We had Miss Belle Wallace the next year and then my mother took over the next year and taught the South Wapiti school for the next seven years. The last year, however, a substitute teacher was in several times as Mother found out she had cancer so had to go to Edmonton several times for cancer treatments. Mother passed away on February 24, 1953, my grandmother in September 1945, and grandfather on March 4, 1954.



Mrs. Day, Melba and Mrs. Arne Nelson.

I used to ride over the river to Don Noye's farm in Dimsdale, to visit their daughter Meriel, during the summer holidays and then she would ride back with me. George, Bunny and I made several trips across the river to visit the Osbornes too. We went picking berries on the sand ridges, north of our place on horseback or in the democrat with Grandpa.

In 1955 I married Norman Eyben. We have five children. Three boys, Kim, Dale and Kelly born at the coast during our five years there, and a daughter Melody



Freda Hamell (later Mrs. Anton Berg) Leola, Bunny and Mrs. Day.

and a son, Clinton, born in Dawson Creek. We now live on a small farm at mile 10 on the Alaska Highway.

George married Annette Grubert from the Grovedale area in 1959. They have two sons, Mark and Clinton and two daughters, Anita and Tammy.

Melba (Bunny) married David Schenk, the forest ranger of the district for several years, in 1960. They have a son, Carlin and two daughters, Glenda and Laura.

Dad passed away on November 15, 1975. George farms the home place as well as other land he has added to it. He is in the logging business in the winter with cats and skidders and usually has equipment working in the summer as well.

The South Wapiti district has opened up a lot in the last few years, both in agriculture and gas and oil discovery.

The Vic Elford Family

Victor Russell Elford was born to Edward and Elizabeth Elford at Sheridan, Montana, on April 10, 1904. He spent much of his childhood riding around the northern States and the Prairie Provinces behind his dad's saddle. Consequently, he received little formal education but lots of "life learning." Born with a good measure of British grit, and travelling the country as he did, Vic tried his hand at many a career while he was still a tender age. By the time he reached his early 20's, he had been a cowboy, a wrestler and a farmer, among other things.

On April 7, 1926, he married Verna Dunlop. They started farming at Marwayne, Alberta where their first three children, Verna, Russell and Victor were born.

But for this man of challenges, the frontier beckoned, the great Peace River country. So, in the spring of 1930, Vic, his wife and family, and father, Edward, boarded the train for Dimsdale, Alberta. They arrived on April 29, and found their first northern home on the VanScickle place for a couple of months until Vic could find the spot that was calling him.

That spot turned out to be about as far south as settlement went, a hill across the Wapiti south of Wembley.

Moving time was June. The Wapiti was high and there was no ferry, but that was just one of the challenges of homesteading. The Elfords built a large raft, took their wagon apart and loaded it on the raft with all their belongings, including chickens and pigs, and crossed the river, with the horses and two cows swimming along behind. A.L. Osborne, who lived on the north bank, took Verna and the children and Dad Elford over in a row boat.

The wagon was re-assembled and loaded, and a 15 mile journey over bush trails and corduroyed muskeg was undertaken to reach the chosen site.

There, on what is still known locally as Elford's Hill, the Elford family began homesteading. They lived in a tent until Carl Berg helped Vic build a barn, which they used for a home before their house could be built.

During the summer, the government had a road camp situated at the Wapiti crossing, where they were making a road down the hill in preparation for installing a ferry. Vic got a job working on the road crew, and was to do so again for many summers. For the next ten years, he would spend the summer months, usually with his team and fresno, helping to make the roads for this country that was growing and demanding easier access.

When the Elfords went to their hill, there was only one family further south and that was the Ryan family. Nearest neighbors to the north were the Mercers. Though neighbors were not close, they were always good and kind. In the fall of 1930, Vic had logs out for a house. One day, the neighbors arrived before daybreak for a building bee. The house was up by night time.

The hill always boasted higher temperatures than the surrounding country, and so it was an ideal spot for a garden. Hazel nuts even grew there. Elfords always had one of the best gardens in the country.

Tamarack posts were plentiful nearby, and the Elfords cut thousands of them during the winters and sold them for a few cents a post. Vic also made some money from trapping. He had a long trapline from Iroquois Creek to a couple of lakes east of there, and a trusty dogteam of three huskies and a collie. He sold most of his fur to A.K. Watts at the Pipestone Creek Store. Vic remembers the time he sold nine coyotes for $9 a piece, a profitable event at that time.

One year, Ole Berg had a large stack of wheat bundles that had not been threshed in the fall. He wanted them taken across the river to Wapiti Bill Hosker's threshing outfit after the snow had come. Vic loaded the whole stack (1200 bundles) on one 10 x 20 foot rack and made the trip.

It took eight head of horses to get the outfit up the Wapiti River hill. When they got to Wapiti Bill's, the weather was so cold that Wapiti Bill's son, Harold, could not get the Hart Parr started to run the threshing machine. There was nothing to do but wait a few days till the thermometer rose again. So, the crew adjourned to Watts' bunkhouse for the duration to play penny ante. You worked hard in those days when necessary, but you really knew how to use the in-between-times to relax.

Most of the homesteaders could see the funny side of life and Vic was usually ahead of the gang when it came to providing laughs. When the Elfords lived near the South Wapiti school, they bought a cream separator to make better use of all the milk from their cows. Bud Goebel was at their place the day they set the separator up, and he helped them set it on a block just outside the kitchen door. They made sure to oil the machine carefully with the separator oil Vic had brought home in a convenient whiskey bottle.

As they were doing this, they spied Johnny Ryan coming down the hill toward the yard. Now, a bottle of whiskey was a neighborly thing to share, and Vic, Bud and Johnny had often done so. Vic and Bud could see no reason why this time should be any different. As Johnny rode into the yard, Bud tipped the whiskey bottle up and appeared to take a hearty slug. He passed the bottle to Vic who did likewise. Johnny swung from his horse, and gratefully reached for the proffered bottle. He eagerly took a few glub-glubs, got one swallow down his gullet and with a snort of disgust, spewed the rest of the mouthful on the ground. Brother Jim Ryan later reported John didn't need a dose of salts all summer.

During the first six years on The Hill, three more children arrived to the Elfords, Findlay, Anne and Eva. Findlay arrived in July of 1931 at the Grande Prairie hospital, and Anne in December of 1934, right on schedule.

Eva, however, chose to arrive 22 days ahead of time so there was no time for the long trip out to the hospital. Vic delivered her himself (1936) making good use of his veterinary kit and skills.

By this time, the older children were ready for, or nearing school age and something had to be done about get-

ting near a school. The South Wapiti school was newly in operation, so Verna filed on a homestead just north of the school and Vic bought a quarter from Mrs. O. Berg for $700 (which he later sold to L. Gerow for $2500). The family enjoyed having closer neighbors and young Verna, Russell and Victor were able to start their formal education.

In 1939, the Elford's decided to move to Pipestone Creek. Vic bought the SW 13-70-8-W6 from Bob Krantz for $700. Now it was time for the younger children to begin school, too, at the newly opened Pipestone Creek school just north of the store.

In the early forties, on the move again to greener pastures, Vic rented the H. Thompson land at Dimsdale where he and the family farmed for five years. From there they moved to Grande Prairie and leased Macklin's Dairy for three years.

Dad Elford, who had lived with or near Vic and his family all these years, passed away in 1956.

In 1962, Vic's wife, Verna, also passed away and ten years later, his daughter, Verna, followed.

After leaving the dairy, Vic went into selling cars, being a salesman for the Ford garage until 1973.

In 1970, he married Ann Wiebe and they now live along the Wapiti, taking care of the Gordon L. Stewart Sand and Gravel property. They grow a good, big garden, and with a root cellar, are able to keep their vegetables in excellent condition all winter.

After many years of "poaching", Vic now protects the deer and other wildlife. He has become a real nature lover now that he no longer needs to use nature for a living. He had the opportunity recently to tame a coyote. One winter, a small female coyote turned into their driveway to avoid a car that was passing on the road. She floundered a little way off the driveway into the snow, and Vic could see that she was weak from hunger. He offered her fresh meat and it was not long before he had her so tame she would hold out her paw and smile at him. She was a delightful pet for a year, and then one day Vic found her broken body lying beside the highway, victim of a passing vehicle.

Telling stories has long been one of Vic's talents and pleasures. His latest bear story, one of many from his lifetime, involves an incident that occurred in the summer of 1978.

At the sand and gravel pit where Vic is caretaker, they were having some trouble with the bears. Fish and Wildlife Officers were endeavoring to trap the animals, but not much success had come their way. One rainy day, a big black bear happened to amble past the shop at the pit. The hunting instinct in Vic took fire, and he grabbed up his .303 and took a shot at the passer-by.

Now, bears are not the easiest target on which to hit the bull's eye, and Vic figured he'd touched this one somewhere on the outer ring. Bruin took off, with Vic in hot pursuit, through the blinding bush. When Vic got through the bush and into the open beside the gravel pit, there stood his target, large as life. He took a more leisurely aim and squeezed the trigger. The bear let out a terrible scream and headed straight for Vic, who was none too calmly trying to get in another shot, which misfired. Bruin took a big leap and lit right beside the now frozen marksman.

With his chest already drawn in under the hug he imagined he was about to get, Vic watched with amazement as the bear turned at right angles and bounded off into the bush. Vic hurriedly came alive again and fired two more shots at Bruin, both of which misfired.

"Well, you can't win 'em all," Vic thought as he turned away from the scene and headed home, still white and shaking. He had not gone more than a few yards through the bush, when he came upon a freshly shot carcass of a big black bear. This had to be the one he had shot as it passed the shop. The bear that lunged at him just minutes ago was long gone in the opposite direction, never to be seen again.

Vic and his wife, Ann, live happily along the Wapiti, keeping in close touch with their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Vic has 18 grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren from the marriages of his six children.

His eldest daughter, Verna, married Andy Ross and their children are: Russell, Jim, Eva, Evelyn, Ken and Maryanne.

Vic's eldest son, Russell, is married to Mary Steirle and they live in Grande Prairie with their three children, Lorne, Leanne and Lance.

Victor, junior, married Joan Diemert and they live at Calgary with their family of Dale, Anne, Neil, Deane and Faye.

Youngest son, Findlay, married Helen Risling and they live at Campbell River, B.C. with their family of Connie and Dianne.

Daughter Ann is married to Jack Allewell and they live in Sherwood Park, Alberta, with their children Duncan and Donald.

The youngest member of Vic's family, Eva, is married to Floyd Gable and they live just outside Grande Prairie with their family of Connie, Kirk, Lorne and Neil.

The Percy Elliott Family

as told by Margaret

Percy was born in Bedfordshire, England, and at the age of 15 came with his family to Toronto, where he worked in a printing office. Margaret was born in



Percy Elliott, Bill Mercer, Frannie Riggs, Herb Riggs, Margaret Elliott, Frank Dormer, Barbara Mercer and Jack Riggs.

Glasgow, Scotland. When she was three years old her family immigrated to Montreal, and eight years later they moved to Toronto. After leaving school Margaret worked in a shoe factory. She and Percy were married in Toronto in 1928. Three days after their wedding they left for Govenlock, Saskatchewan. Percy knew this area, having gone out there on harvest excursions.

They bought land there. The land was poor as were the weather conditions. Yvonne, (Bobby) was born in Maple Creek in August of 1929. In April, 1931, Margaret and Percy, having heard of the Peace River country, left Govenlock on a trip that was to take them two months.

They loaded two wagons, as two other men had joined them to make the trip. One wagon was a caboose, with a bed in it and a stove fastened to the floor. Margaret baked bread as they travelled, she says it didn't fall either. They didn't travel on week-ends. This was clean up time, wash clothes, bake other things, visit with other travellers and make any necessary repairs. They averaged 30 miles a day. The other wagon carried the household effects. It was partitioned off and in this partition they had chickens, which laid eggs for them. In the evening they opened the door and let the chickens run. They always returned to the enclosure to roost.

They had originally intended to go to Dawson Creek, but had heard how good the land was around Elmworth. Mr. Howatt persuaded them to look around there, where they stayed for a year. In the meantime Percy was still scouting land. In the spring of 1932 Percy came home from one scouting trip and said, "I've found a homestead." They packed all their possessions again and headed across the Wapiti, south of Wembley, to their bush homestead. They built a log house with the help of the Thorntons who were neighbors. The house had a pole roof with moss on it and a dirt floor. For Bobby to get closer to school they cancelled Len Gibbon's land claim and moved into their cabin. Later they chose another building site and put up their own house and out buildings.

In August of 1935 Joan was born at the Currie place. Dr. Carlisle came out to Margaret, Frannie Riggs was to be the midwife. Percy was going to administer the anaesthetic but when the time came Percy got faint, Doc told him to get out and put his head between his knees.

In 1939 after war broke out, they decided to pack up and go back to Toronto, but kept their taxes paid on the land. Margaret worked in Eatons making khaki shirts and Percy worked in a ship yard. After four years, they had enough of city life, and in late summer of 1943 left for the home in the west. They brought Peter the canary with them on the train. He was in his cage and when they got on the train, the conductor said, "You'll never make it with that thing, he'll die." On the train they'd put him on the window sill and he'd sing. Gordon McCullough met them at Wembley with his big truck. When they stopped at Watts' Peter was in the back of the truck singing away. Later when he died, Bobby held a funeral for him out in the flower garden.



Back row: 1936. Fronnie Riggs, Mary Sutherland holding Muriel, Margaret Elliott holding Joan.
Front row: Jack Riggs, June Riggs, Yvonne Elliott, Audrey Sutherland.

The house had had the windows stolen, mice and pack rats had moved in and the weeds were chest high.

They stayed at Sutherlands while they repaired the roof, replaced the windows and cleaned house.

Early one spring Bobby had to have her appendix out. The ice was out in the middle of the river, and they had to walk on the ice to the row boat, ride in the boat, then walk on the ice again. Osbornes took them to Grande Prairie where Bobby was operated on.

Winters were rough on Margaret and the girls who were doing the chores while Percy was out in the sawmills. They milked seven cows. Some of the lumber truckers would haul the cream into Wembley for them. There were quite a few pigs to feed. Percy would come home on week-ends to help keep feed around and the extra chores done.

As things became better, brush pilers and power equipment cleared land for them and they acquired more land.

In 1947 Bobby and Norman Eng were married, they lived on Eng's place, later built a home up on Toad Mountain with a beautiful view to the west. Two children were born to them, Wayne in 1949 and Karen in 1951.

Joan married Ray Bean in 1953. Their wedding dance was at Dimsdale. They had two children, Darlene and Dale. Dale was just a baby when Ray passed away. Joan came home and lived in Clay Brooks' house in Elliott's yard.

In the late 40's Clay Brooks had built a house in Elliott's yard, so they could keep an eye on him. He ate with them and Margaret did his laundry.

Margaret's greatest delight was her garden, both her flowers and her vegetable garden, she always knew what to do to make them flourish.

In 1965 they sold their land to Sandy Crichton and moved to Grande Prairie. Here Percy worked for more than ten years for Mountview Trailer Sales. He would decorate Mountview's float for the County Parade. He won five trophies consecutively for his floats. When Percy died, Mountview put up a challenge trophy in his name.

Percy's health failed him, but not his sense of humor. He was able to make a trip back to his birthplace in England. It was a great thrill for him and he had his story and picture written up in the home town paper. He died in 1977.

Bobby has remarried, and lives in Rimbey. She is an active artist; she and her artist friend have held an art show in Rimbey. She prefers to do scenery—such as homesteads from photos.

Joan is now Mrs. Ken Calberry. She and Ken have a son and a daughter and they live in Calgary. Jo spends her time as a housewife and mother. She is also a golf and Bingo enthusiast. She is talented with her hands and likes handicrafts.

Margaret is still caring for her flowers and vegetables and puttering in her greenhouse. She also enjoys her crocheting and fancy work, and a cup of tea with the neighbors.

Einer Eng

Einer Eng was born in Sweden in 1900. He came to Canada as a small child with his parents. They settled in Winnipeg, Manitoba. There they opened a tailor shop.

In 1926 he moved to Beatty, Saskatchewan. There he bought grain for the Brooks Elevator Company. There he also met and married Myrtle Lofstrom in 1928.

After hearing the praises of the Peace River country from Myrtle's father, Jonas Lofstrom, they decided to come to the Wapiti district. They drove up in their Whippet car. That must have been the popular car in those days as several people had them. Einer filed on his homestead, then went back to his job in Beatty. Myrtle, their two sons, Ralph and Norman, and Einer's mother, Ella Eng, stayed with Myrtle's father until their house was built on the homestead. They stayed on the farm for a year and a half, then Einer came for them and took them back to Saskatchewan. There their youngest son Allen, was born.

In 1934 they came back to the Wapiti for another year, then moved on to Webster. There Einer bought grain. The boys went to school. When the war started they moved to Fort Erie, Ontario, to work in the factory, building planes for the war effort.



Yvonne Elliott, Einar Eng, Olive Gerow, Ralph Eng, Kay ?, Allen Eng, Morris Lofstrom, Alice Gerow and Bob McCullough taken on the Pipestone ferry.



Mr. Gerow, Alice Lofstrom, Einar Eng, Margaret Elliott, Myrtle Eng, Olive Gerow, Harold Lofstrom, Ralph Eng, Mrs. Gerow, Percy Elliott, Joan Elliott holding Lloyd Lofstrom and Allen Eng, 1946.

Two years later they came back west and went to work on the Alaska Highway. Einer's mother passed away while they lived in Ontario.

After the war, Engs moved to High Prairie. Myrtle opened a cafe called The Orchid Lunch, and Einer bought grain. From there they went cooking in northern Alberta, for an oil company. Einer passed away in 1959. Myrtle stayed with the company until 1961 then came to Grande Prairie to make her home with Norman and his two children, Wayne and Karen. She took one trip to Sweden with Ralph and his wife, Nancy.

In 1979 Myrtle and Jean Wood went on a three week tour of Europe. She now lives in Aurora Court in Grande Prairie. She belongs to the Royal Purple and several recreational groups.

Ralph works for Environment Canada. He married Nancy Wood. They have two children, Bryan and Marvin. Nancy passed away in January, 1978.

Norman lives in Grande Prairie. He works for the Alberta Liquor Control Board. He is married to Jenny Polick from Worsley. Norman's son, Wayne, lives in Whitehorse. He is married and has a son, Dalles, and a daughter, Corine. He is a helicopter pilot.

Norman's daughter, Karen, lives east of Grande Prairie. She is married to Albert Schulze. They have two sons, Shane and Michael.

Allen is married to Marg Lauferell. He is principal of the Seba Beach high school. They have two daughters and a son. Cathy is married and lives near Calgary. Barb is going to school in Calgary. Son Jamie works for an oil company and lives near Edmonton.

The Archibald Gerow Family

by Carol Lofstrom, granddaughter

Archibald Cameron Gerow was born in Peterborough, Ontario, March 30, 1882. Annie Walker, his petite and spirited wife, was born in Sheffield, England in June 1886. Her parents died when she was very young. She lived in an orphanage until she was 12, then a kind lady took her home to serve as a maid. This same lady helped her to come to Canada when she became of age. Archie and Annie were married in Beatty, Saskatchewan. On their small farm in Saskatchewan, these two people had nine children.

With the dirty thirties approaching and no hope of making a living on the dry wind-swept prairies, the Archie Gerows joined their neighbors on the great trek northwest to the Peace River country. On October 11, 1929, they loaded up their Whippet car with their meager belongings and eight surviving children and left the prairies behind.

After six days of uninterrupted misfortunes, they arrived on the shores of Slave Lake. Here their overloaded car gave up to the impossible road conditions. Annie and five of the children took the train to Wembley. They were met by nephew Henry McCullough and taken to his parents' homestead across the Wapiti River. After trying to repair the car for several days and finding it impossible to get repairs, Archie and the three boys also took the train to Wembley.

The next part of the story is taken from my grandfather's diary as only he can tell it.

"We arrived in Wembley about four in the afternoon and hired a car to take us to the river. I got Bert Osborne to take us across by boat. We climbed the hill and walked to my brother-in-law's, Jack McCullough. There I found

the rest of my family. Jack had taken a homestead just on top of the river hill. He had picked one out for me just east of his, also on top of the hill. After looking it over, that is where I decided to build. The next move was to build a shack and move my family before the cold weather set in, as it was now the first of November.

"I was able to hire a team of ponies, and with the help of Jack, his three oldest boys and my oldest, we started to build. I selected a site on a creek bank. We dug out the bank the size of the house, 16 feet wide and 28 feet long. There were plenty of good spruce trees on the north side of my quarter. Two started cutting logs, two hauling them in, while the rest started to build. When we got the walls up I put on a pole roof, covered it with hay, then put on a good six inches of dirt. We chinked the walls with moss, put two windows in the south, a floor, and we were ready for winter.

"There were a lot of travellers those days and Jack always made everyone welcome. It was inevitable that some of the hitch-hikers of the road, commonly called graybacks, would show up. Before we realized it they were all through the house. Annie bundled up the kids and took off for our new shack.

"As the weather got a little cooler, I took the train back to get the car.

"In 1936 we moved up onto Tom's homestead SW 15-69-8-W6, so the children would be able to attend school. They had a little over a mile to walk from there.

"In 1940 after Mr. Riggs left, we got the Post Office. I put in a little store as well. The boys were able to get work and it became easier to make a living.

"When the war started Lloyd, Tom and Keith left to join up. Allen went to work on the Alaska Highway. Lyle joined the army as soon as he was old enough.

"In 1951 we retired to Grande Prairie. We lived in a little house the boys had built for us."



Mr. and Mrs. Gerow when they had the Post Office.

My grandparents lived in this little house for several years, they celebrated their Golden Anniversary. Grandmother became sick and was taken to a home in Camrose. She passed away April 21, 1968.

Grandfather went to live in Central Park Lodge after he was unable to take care of himself. He passed away August 18, 1969.

Annie and Archie Gerow had eight children.

ALLEN married Florence Gabler and their family consists of five children: Gloria, (Mrs. Bob Kaechler, with three children, Karen, Cindy and Robbie), Bert (married to Connie, with children Tracy and Tammy), Patricia (Mrs. Lorne Plum, with three daughters, Sandra, Colleen and Shelly), Donna (Mrs. Fred Flemming, two children Rhonda and Wayne), and Lynn (Mrs. Edward Gula, with two children). Allen passed away in December 1972 after a long illness.

TOM married Shirley Watson, and their family consists of three children: Dorothy (Mrs. Bert Morrison, with two daughters, Sheila and Sharron), Marion (Mrs. Rod Morrison, with two girls, Jody and Heather), and Stanley (married to Janet with one child, Carmen). Tom passed away July 26, 1968.

PEGGY (Ella Margaret) married Frank Lowes and their family consists of three children: Barbara, (Mrs. Gene Bellevance, with children Marnie and Greg), Lawrence (married to Marilyn) and Bryan (married to Lynn with two children). Peggy pre-deceased her parents in March 1964.

KEITH married Pat Watts. They have five sons: Rod, Donald (married to Carol Newnes, with son Brock), Terry, Randy and Cameron.

LLOYD married Nellie Watson and they have two children: George (married to Marlowe Volden, with two sons, Shawn and Michael), and Ann (Mrs. Lawrence Hosker, with two children, Sandi and Bryan).

ALICE married Harold Lofstrom and they have six children: Lloyd, Leanne (Mrs. Bob Jobson with four children, Darrell, Cindy and twins Jesse and Jason), David (married to Laura Wasylciw, with three children, Charlene, Ricky and Sharon), Carol (Mrs. Paul Freemark with children Corri, Brian and Aaron), Dale (married to Janet Balisky, with two children, Serina and Clayton) and Cathy, still at home.

LYLE is not married, and lives on the Percy Elliott place at South Wapiti.

OLIVE married Roland Dufresne and they have four children: Rosanne, Jeannie (Mrs. Barry Taggart with three sons, Mark and the twins, Adrian and Christopher), Donna (Mrs. Eric Hogland) and Danny (married to Dawn, with one daughter).

The Keith Gerow Family

Keith Gerow, son of Mr. & Mrs. Archibald Gerow, was born December 24, 1919 in Melfort, Saskatchewan. In 1929 he moved with his parents and family to the Peace River country, south of Wembley on the south bank of the Wapiti River. As there was no school close by, the older children took correspondence lessons at home. At an early age Keith had to go out to work, to help provide for the younger ones at home.

Then in June, 1941, Keith and his brother, Tom, joined the army, going overseas in June, 1942. Two years later, just before D Day, Keith developed pneumonia and pleurisy, ending up in hospital in England. Before long he was shipped home on the Lady Nelson hospital ship, transferred to hospital in Calgary and then Edmonton,

where he spent a total of nine months. Upon his discharge from hospital in March 1945, he returned to South Wapiti, where he bought NW 10-69-8-W6, and later purchased SW 10-69-8-W6 through the V.L.A.



Keith, Rod and Pat Gerow.

On November 1, 1947, Keith was married to Patricia Watts of Pipestone Creek. The first few winters of married life were spent in the bush, Keith in the mill and Pat in the cook house. During this time Keith was in partnership in the trucking business with brothers Tom, Lloyd and Lyle. Summers were spent on the farm until it became evident that we could not make a good enough living to support three children, Rodney Dale, born December 8, 1948, Donald Keith, April 26, 1952, and Terry Frances, March 24, 1954, which we had by then.

In May, 1956, we moved to Grande Prairie where Keith was employed by Grande Prairie Lumber, (later North Canadian Forest Industries) for the next ten years. Two more sons, Randall Kingsford, born May 15, 1958, and Cameron Lee, March 2, 1962 were born during this time. Rodney graduated from G.P.H.S. in June 1966.

In June 1966, we sold our home in Grande Prairie, packed up and took off to B.C. We spent one year in Creston, then in August 1967, moved to Salmon Arm where we have lived ever since. Keith soon found work as a carpenter, Pat as a postal clerk.

One son, Don, is married to the former Carol Newnes of Salmon Arm, and they have a son Brock, born May 19, 1978. The boys (in between travels) live in and consider Salmon Arm home. Youngest son Cam, graduated from Salmon Arm Senior High in June 1980.

The Harry Lloyd Gerow Family

by Mrs. Nellie Gerow

Lloyd was born November 27, 1921 in Melfort, Saskatchewan. In October of 1929 he left Saskatchewan with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A.C. GErow to come to the Peace River district.

Lloyd obtained his schooling in the South Wapiti district. At the age of 16 he started working and had various jobs until joining the army in 1942. He went overseas in March, 1943, and returned home in January of 1946, obtaining his discharge in March, 1946. In the fall of that same year, Lloyd and three of his brothers, Tom, Keith and Lyle bought a Fargo Three-Ton Special truck with which they hauled lumber for about three years.

Lloyd married Nellie, daughter of George and Isabel Watson in March, 1947. They lived in the South Wapiti district until 1951. During this time they farmed in the summer and in the winter they moved to the bush where Lloyd worked in a sawmill. They had two children, George and Ann.

During the summer of 1951 they moved to Grande Prairie where he worked for the Grande Prairie Lumber Company. This company was later sold to North Canadian Forest Industries, with whom Lloyd is still employed as a heavy duty mechanic.

In 1967 their son, George, married Marlowe, daughter of Hans and Elvina Volden of Valhalla Centre. They have two sons, Shawn and Michael.

In 1970 Ann married Lawrence, son of Ralph and Molly Hosker of the Pipestone Creek area. They have two children, Sandi and Bryan.



Lloyd and Nellie Gerow. Our first home in South Wapiti (1947).

Len and Sadie Gibbons

by Ray Campbell and Audrey Lowe

Len Gibbons and Harry Johnson went across the Wapiti to look for land about 1928. This was about the time Mr. Lofstrom and Alphons and Sundins were settling on their land in the South Wapiti district. Len homesteaded a half section, a quarter for Sadie and one for himself. Percy Elliott later cancelled the south quarter, and today Lyle Gerow owns it.



Sadie and Len Gibbons Aug. 1980.

Len was a blacksmith by trade, and helped to supplement his income by working for A.K. Watts at Pipestone Creek, Jim Woods at Wembley and Alex Smith at Grande Prairie. He had numerous other jobs in the Peace River country as well. Sadie and son Billy stayed on the homestead while Len was away working.

They gave up their homestead about 1934 and went to Manitoba. During the war years they again met the Elliotts, this time when they were living in Toronto.

Len was a veteran of World War I and enlisted again in World War II. He was with a Demolition Squad. While overseas he picked up an explosive he didn't understand and it blew up in his face, blinding him for awhile. He also lost some fingers. He was sent home to Toronto, then on to Shaughnessy Hospital in Vancouver.

One day Len was talking with a friend of his about some of his escapades. The friend asked, "How many wars have you been in, anyway?"

Len replied, "Three. The first World War, the second World War, and I've been married for 52 years. If that isn't three wars, I don't know what is."

Len and Sadie were up visiting in the area in the fall of 1980 and stopped in to see Ray and Aggie Campbell. Ray said to him, "You're a pretty healthy man."

Sadie spoke up. "Yes, the only way he will ever die is somebody will have to shoot him."

Len was quiet for a minute, then asked, "And who will shoot me?"

His dear wife spoke again, "I will."

Billy is unmarried and lives on the Queen Charlotte Islands where he is in construction work.

Len and Sadie are still in Vancouver, living in a Legion Home. Len spends his time golfing, and working at the Legion. He helped fit a pleasure boat the Legion had purchased.

Since Len retired, they have made three trips across Canada even though Sadie doesn't care for travel that much. They especially enjoyed their trip back to the Peace River country to renew old friendships and to see how the country had opened up since they left so many years ago.

William Henderson

Bill Henderson was born in Ontario in 1877 He and his wife came to Wembley about the time the railroad came in and he worked in the roundhouse for several years. His wife passed away and shortly afterwards Bill had the misfortune to lose one of his legs in a train accident. He lived in a small house in Wembley. After he lost his leg



Bill Henderson and Sarah Hubert at Bill's farm in July 1948.



Mike Maloney, Assar Vicklund, Bill Henderson, Sarah Hubert, Frances Schenk, Christine Schenk, and Celia Schenk.

Sarah Hubert came and took care of him. Bob Shaw made him a peg leg. Bob had a peg leg and was running the Pipestone ferry at the time. Later Bill and Sarah took over the ferry job for awhile.

After running the ferry for a time they decided to go farming. They bought the Earl Thornton farm in South Wapiti. There they raised cattle and hogs until they retired. They sold the farm to Sandy Crichton.

Sarah was very artistic and made many little knick-knacks to decorate their log house. She painted the floor in a pattern to make it look like linoleum. When they retired they moved back to Wembley.

Bill passed away on January 21, 1963, at the age of 86 years. Sarah soon left and went to live with her sister in Stettler. She has passed away also.

Alex Hutchinson

by N. Ryan

Mr. Alex Hutchinson came to the South Wapiti district in 1929 and homesteaded on NE 21-69-8-W6, where Gerald Ryan now lives. Alex's little shack was on the west side of the quarter as that is where the trail cut across country in the early years. Clay Brooks homesteaded the quarter to the north but made his home with Alex.

Alex left the South Wapiti district to join the army during the war and was a mechanic overseas, working on tanks. He told of fixing one tank and when the next one came for repairs, he was so surprised to see Johnny Kitson, also from South Wapiti, driving it.

After the war Alex went farther north to the Blueberry Mountain district where, still a bachelor, he was killed on his farm in a combine accident, when his clothing became entangled in the shaft of a standing combine. This tragic accident happened about September 24, 1956.

John Isberg

In the summer of 1929, my brother Zybren, Herb Holman and myself, John Isberg left Melfort, Saskatchewan for the west country. We had received word from John, Edwin Sundin and Carl Berg about the homestead land available south of the Wapiti River.

We drove by car to Edmonton, Lesser Slave Lake, then to the Peace River crossing, around to Dunvegan, on to Grande Prairie and then in to Wembley, Alberta. We drove south to the Wapiti River and walked in from there.

Carl Berg was already living there in his log cabin. He said we could stay at his place while we looked for some homestead land.



Emil Isberg, Florence, Evelyn, Linda, George and John.
Front row: Myrtle, Stanley and Gilbert.

After getting my land I built a small cabin on it. Shortly after I returned to Melfort where my family was on the farm.

In 1931 my wife Linda, myself and six children, Florence, Stanley, Evelyn, Myrtle, Gilbert and George returned to the Wapiti area.

We travelled by train to Wembley. Bill Palmer drove us to the river and across the ferry. I then borrowed a team of horses from Bud Goebel and drove to my brother Emil's place, stopping on the way at Jack and Sadie Penny's place. Mrs. Penny served us a very delicious lunch.

Emil had gone there earlier and already had a quarter and a bigger cabin on it. We were able to stay with him until I built a bigger cabin for my family.

Later I bought two cows, two pigs and some chickens. I also bought a team of horses, a wagon and some farm equipment. Then I cleared and broke sixteen acres of land to put a crop in for feed for the stock. Our crop had a snowfall on it in July. In the winter time Emil and I ran a trapline. We got twelve dollars for coyotes and around fifteen cents for squirrels. We also caught a silver fox and several weasels.



Christmas at John Isberg's in 1934.
Harry Adine, John Sundin, Arne Nelson, Florence, Evelyn, Linda, Herb Holmund, Carl Berg, John holding Helen, Chester Wagner, Ed Sundin.
Front row: Myrtle, George, Gilbert and Stanley.

The year 1933 Carl Berg and I got a job building a house in Huallen and the next year we built one for Jack MacIntosh in Dimsdale.

In the fall we used to go stooking and threshing around Wembley. It took all sorts of jobs to keep the family fed.

In 1934 I delivered a baby daughter born to us on the homestead. We named her Helen. Mrs. Troyer was the midwife.

On Sundays we used to attend meetings at the home of Clarence and Martha Troyer, for church and Sunday School. Our get togethers with our neighbors and friends were always very enjoyable.

House gatherings were always enjoyed. Dances were held at Carl and Aggie Brooks' place, usually somebody would provide the music. Carl Berg played the violin, Vic Elford the mouth organ, Oric Remington the Jew's Harp and Emil Isberg would rattle the bones. The women would provide the lunch.

Vic and Verna Elford's home was also a place for dances, as they had a fairly large house. Vic was a good MC and Len Gibbons called the square dances.

In 1935 we moved back to the Brockington district again, north of Melfort, Saskatchewan. In the forties we sold the farm there and headed west again. We lived in Wembley for awhile before moving on to Dawson Creek, B.C. where I still reside. My wife passed away in 1957.

The oldest daughter Florence Wagner, now a widow, lives at Charlie Lake, B.C. She has four children and eleven grandchildren.

Evelyn and James Pollock have five children and eleven grandchildren and live in Victoria, B.C.

Stanley and his wife Pearl, have five children and several grandchildren, and live in Merritt, B.C.

Myrtle Colley, now a widow, has two sons and four grandchildren, and lives in Victoria, B.C.

Gilbert and his wife Ruth, live in England. They have five children and several grandchildren.

George and his wife Audrey, live in Grande Prairie, Alberta. They have four children, and several grandchildren.

The youngest member of the family Helen Carson, and her husband Stanley, live in Dawson Creek, B.C. They have two children, both in school.

My brother Emil, lives at Enterprise, N.W.T.

The Lofstrom Family

The Lofstrom family were one of the first to settle in the Wapiti District. Back in Saskatchewan, people were always hearing talk of the Peace River Country and each thought how the move to this area could prove to be prosperous.

It all began in the fall of 1928, when Alphons Lofstrom and his father Jonas, came to the Peace River Country. When they arrived in Wembley, there was talk of the land across the Wapiti from Bert Osborne. Alphons and Jonas decided to make the trek over to the Wapiti district and with them came Carl Berg and John Sundin. Alphons and his dad chose some land for themselves and Morris, who at this time was waiting for them in Saskatchewan, and squatted on it. They built cabins on this land for themselves and in March, Alphons returned to Saskatchewan. Jonas remained in the Peace until that summer when he too retreated to Saskatchewan.

The following fall, 1929, Jonas, Alphons and Morris decided to come back. They left Saskatchewan on October 5, in a Model T car that had been converted into a truck. It took them five days to make the trip as they got lost. At this time there wasn't much for roads and the three of them figured they would travel through Edmonton, but instead, they completely missed it. Part of the time they drove on the railroad tracks by Slave Lake. They briefly stopped off in Peace River and eventually made it to Grande Prairie, but it was nothing compared to its size now.

Finally on the tenth of October, the three-some arrived in Wembley, and on the twelfth, Morris, Jonas and Alphons drove to the Wapiti River where they boated across and continued on to their homestead on foot. Here they remained for the winter and trapped for a living. Once a month the three of them would walk to Wembley for groceries as there was no road for them to drive on. When spring arrived, so did the work on their homesteads. They began clearing the land by hand. During the summer, Jonas, Morris and Alphons went across the river and worked for A.K. Watts, building fences and clearing land. For payment, they were given a team of horses which made it much easier to get around and the work on their own place much simpler. Jonas was quite an axe man and taught his two sons how to build log houses, thus, they got quite a lot of work building houses and made a little money at the same time. In 1934, Jonas, Alphons and Morris helped haul the logs and build the first school house in the district. In their spare time they kept at work clearing the land.



Alphons and Morris Lofstrom with their first tractor.

As the years went past, the community started to grow. More people began to arrive and settle in this Wapiti district. Church services were held about once a month when Mr. Lindquist, the minister, would walk from Valhalla Centre to one of the settler's houses. At this time a ball team was formed, "The Wapiti Wild Cats" who would walk to Wembley, Dimsdale and Aspen Ridge to have a game for some sort of recreation.

The youngest of the Lofstrom family, Harold, joined his family in 1936. Harold lived with his dad and two brothers until 1939 when he left and joined the army.

Alphons left the area in 1940 and headed for Fort Erie. Here he worked in an airplane factory for 18 months then decided to return to the Wapiti district. When he arrived home, his draft for the army was waiting for him, thus in 1942, he too left for overseas.

In 1941, the first threshing machine was bought by the Lofstrom family and they found themselves doing a lot of work helping the neighbors in this community.

The period of time when Alphons was gone, Morris stayed with their dad and did the farming as by this time they had quite a bit of land under cultivation.

When the war was over in 1945, Alphons and Harold returned from the army. Harold bought some land out in the district and married Alice Gerow. Here they lived for a number of years.

Alphons and Morris continued to farm together as their dad was blind by then. By this time they had accumulated quite a few cattle, thus bought more land.

In 1951, their dad passed away at the age of 80 years. Soon after Alphons built a new house and married Lois Ryan on August 8, 1952.

Morris lived across the road from them but boarded with them until he married May Ryan in 1957. They have two children, Lorraine and Brian.

Lois and Alphons have two children also, Edna who is married to Gordon Ingledew (two children, Tracy and Gordie) and Jim who was married to Diane Edwards on April 5, 1980.

Harold moved to Grande Prairie with his wife Alice, and they have six children, Leanne, Lloyd, David, Carol, Dale and Cathy. Harold died in June, 1980.

The Harold Lofstrom Family

by Alice Lofstrom

Harold Lofstrom arrived in this world July 2, 1914, on his parents' farm in Saskatchewan. He weighed in at less than two pounds. He was kept alive by the constant vigil of his parents, Jonas Hennig Lofstrom and Marie (Anderson) Lofstrom. After Marie's death in 1921, the family decided to relocate in a more profitable area. In 1928, leaving young Harold behind to finish his education, the family packed up their belongings and headed for the Peace River Country. They went across the Wapiti south of Wembley and took up homesteads. Jonas, Alphons, Morris and Carl Berg were the first ones to homestead in South Wapiti. Harold joined the family in 1936.

When the war broke out in 1939, Harold was one of the first men from the Wapiti district to join the army. He joined up in September and was sent over to England in February. He served four years in the army, taking part in the invasion of Italy with the English and Canadian troops. In the fall of 1944, after being stricken with malaria, he was sent home.

I came with my parents, Archie and Annie Gerow, to the Wapiti district in 1929. I first met Harold at a barn dance on the farm of Mr. Watts at Pipestone Creek. We were married in Grande Prairie on June 8, 1945, then home to a nice supper at my parents' home. Our first home was a log shack on the Sundin quarter. It was one of the most cozy houses we ever lived in, except for the mice that I never got used to nor was I able to get rid of them.



Christmas at Jim Ryan's in 1953.
Jim Ryan, Harold Lofstrom, Alice holding Carol, Alphonse holding Edna, Lois, Nora, Johnny, Ruth, Gladys, Mick, May, Morris, Bobby, Gerald, Jack Blackbourn and Betty.
Sitting: Leanne, Joyce, Ken, Lloyd and David.

By today's standards we had a hard life. Water had to be hauled, in winter we melted snow for the house as well as the livestock, our lights were kerosene lamps and lanterns. We put in long hard hours but compared to our parents before us, we had it easy. Our out-house left much to be desired, you did not linger to read the news or write on the walls when it was forty below zero.

In 1947 we moved to our own land. Harold had bought a quarter from Ed Sundin. He built a two-storey house with lumber, with the help of his brothers. Soon we put up a barn and started milking cows and shipping cream.

We raised six children, three boys and three girls. With the hardships of farm life they grew up with a keen understanding of life. They walked to school warm or cold as there were no buses in the early days. The annual Christmas concerts and summer picnics were looked forward to for months by children and adults alike.

When the children started to reach high school age and one by one had to leave home to go to high school we decided to leave the farm. In 1966 we moved to Grande Prairie, where Harold spent several years in the construction and maintenance business. He also worked for the city of Grande Prairie before his retirement in 1978 for health reasons.

Our family have done very well. Lloyd, David and Carol's husband Paul Freemark, have a truck repair shop in Grande Prairie. Dale and his wife Janet, both work for them.

Leanne and Bob Jobson, with their family have moved back to the Grovedale district and Bob works for Proctor and Gamble. Carol and Paul, David and Laura, Dale and Janet and their families as well as Lloyd and Laura's brother Tony have bought the old Kitson place and are moving back to the Wapiti district.

Cathy is finishing her grade twelve and is at home. Harold passed away in June, 1980.

The John and Susan McCullough Family

Jack and Susan and their family of six boys and one girl lived on a farm in Beatty, Saskatchewan, but after hearing so much about the Peace River country, and how land could be had by homesteading, they decided to move there. They built a box on the back of their truck, put a good roof on it, loaded up what belongings they could

and on July 15, 1928, Jack, Susan and the family started out. They camped along the way, sleeping in the truck and a tent. They drove as far as Slave Lake but had to turn back from there as they couldn't go any farther due to mud and water. They drove back to Westlock where they loaded the truck on the train, the family rode in the caboose, and went as far as McLennan, then drove again by way of Peace River to Grande Prairie and then on to Wembley.

They drove from there up as far as Rolla, B.C. but did not like the country so drove back to Beaverlodge and out around Hazelmere. They would drive as far as they could and then the men would walk, looking for something that they liked. Earlier when they drove over Richmond Hill, Jack made the remark that he liked the looks of the country to the south. They went back to Wembley and rented a house for the family to live in and then Jack, Ralph and Henry went south across the Wapiti River. Bert Osborne rowed them across in a row boat and they walked up the hill. Jack picked a place near the top of the hill on which to homestead. They walked back and forth to Wembley. They got a shack started that fall and finished it the next year. They got work around Wembley to make enough money to live on and buy a few necessities.

In 1929 Jack and the family moved across the river to the homestead, getting Bert Osborne to take them across in the boat. They built a raft to take the heavy stuff



Jack McCullough and one of the boys in a shelter on the homestead in 1929.



Jack McCullough's first shack on his homestead.



Henry McCullough's dog team and Irene, Patricia and Doug Van Schaick.

across, such as cook stove, etc. They had to walk from there to the top of the hill. The boys made quite a few trips up and down before they got everything to the homestead. The stove was carried up by tying poles along the sides to make it easier to carry.

There were a few other settlers in by this time and they got together with axes, shovels and grub hoes and made a trail wide enough to get a wagon up the hill; even so, it was very steep.

In the spring of 1930 they crossed the tractor on the ice and got it up to the homestead. That made work a little easier. The tractor fuel was also crossed on the ice.

In the fall of 1930 Ralph and Gordon got logs out for a bigger house. They were cut and hauled home and in the spring peeled and piled to dry. When they started building they hewed the logs to one side for the inside. It was a two-storey house and the chimney was made of five gallon oil pails welded together and the stove pipes ran up through them. Harry Johnson brought a saw over and sawed shingles from jackpine blocks to shingle the roof. It took a couple of years to build the house and it still stands on the old homestead.

Jack and Susan spent most of their time on the homestead. Anyone that happened to come along was welcome to a nice cup of tea or to spend the night. Susan had a beautiful flower garden in front of the house and in later years when she was not able to get around so well, she began painting pictures of wild life, and doing fancy work.

Gordon pretty well stayed home and helped with the farm work. He also spent some time in the sanitorium for T.B.

Thelma married Bert Jefferies in 1936 and moved to Ft. St. John. They had four girls and one boy. Bert was killed in a train accident in 1971. The girls all married and John stays at home with his mother.

In 1937 Henry married Crystal Brooks and farmed the old Brooks place near Pipestone Creek. When war broke out Pete and Harold joined the army.

Ralph worked with Jim Rutledge around Beaverlodge for several years. Then in 1942 Ralph and Henry went to the Yukon to work on the Canol project. Henry was outfitting at the time with several pack horses. After they came back from there, Ralph went farming on his farm across the road from his dad's homestead. He farmed till about four years ago then sold the farm to Don Barr and

moved his house on to the old homestead and retired. He still resides there.

Henry bought a sawmill for $150 and started sawing lumber in the winters. He operated that mill for a couple of seasons and then bought a more modern mill and sawed for eleven years. His wife Crystal did the cooking with a helper.

For many years Henry was a guide and outfitter taking out mostly American big game hunters.

In 1958 Henry brought the charter in from Edmonton on horseback, when Grande Prairie became a city.

Crystal passed away on January 17, 1967. Henry stayed on the farm for awhile and when the government took the Pipestone ferry out some of the business men around Wembley formed a company and put the ferry in again and charged toll. Henry moved down to the ferry house and operated the ferry for a couple of seasons. A big flood came and the ferry was taken out for good. Henry went to Saskatchewan for a couple of years and when he came back he built a house on the old homestead, which is now owned by his nephew, Raymond.

Bob, Ralph, Harold and Pete all worked on the ferry at different times. Ralph built the trolley to cross on the cable when there was no other way to get across the river. Besides working on the ferry, Bob worked for several years for farmers around the Aspen Ridge area and in later years worked at different jobs around Grande Prairie. He passed away on April 12, 1974 at the age of 62 years.

After the war Harold married Agnes White. They lived in Wembley for awhile and he operated the ferry for quite some time. They had four children, Ralph, Barbara, Sylvia and Judy. Harold passed away while on a hunting trip on October 5, 1966. Agnes remarried and has since passed away.

Gordon stayed on the farm until he was forced to quit due to ill health. He passed away in Grande Prairie, December 31, 1974 at the age of 57 years.

Pete married Lena Wanyandi. He spent quite some time operating the ferry. During that time they lived at the river. Later they moved over to South Wapiti on a farm where they still live. Both Pete and Lena are guides and take out several big game hunters each fall, they also do a great deal of trapping. They have seven boys and two girls.

Norman married Dorothy Napasis and they live between Grovedale and South Wapiti. Norman worked in a logging camp for several winters and now drives truck. They have two children, Vicky and Roxanne.

Yvonne married Bob Ryan and they farm at Valleyview. They have two children, Gail and Vincent.

Laverne married Ken Ryan and they have two children, Laurie and Jamie. They have the store in Grovedale.

Jim married Alice Shandera and they have a daughter, Carman. They live in Grande Prairie. Jim drives truck.

Raymond farms the old homestead and he also drives truck.

Ken and Cheryl have a daughter, Tanya. They live on the old place as well.

Larry, Arthur and Ernest are at home.

The William Mercer Family

by Minnie Mercer

I was born at Pilot Mound, Manitoba, on December 1, 1891, to the Thomas Plunket family. They had moved from Ontario to the prairie country shortly before I was born and consisted of Dad, Mother, my eldest sister Ethel, brother Edwin and sister Maude.

Our sister Maude, was married; also the eldest brother, Edwin. They all had families so I was getting good training as a nursemaid. I had to finally quit school when I was about fourteen years of age. My mum used to say, "Minnie I do hope you will not get married as young as the rest of the family". I assured her I would not get married until I was well on in my twenties. Then there came into the district, a man from B.C. named William Mercer. He seemed to be the kind of man I'd like so we were married on December 8, 1915. We went out to B.C. on our wedding trip and spent the winter at Rosedale.

We returned to Saskatoon in the spring and settled down on his farm of 160 acres. It was about five miles from Saskatoon. We found it was not enough land so sold it and went north. We bought a section of land hoping to raise some beef cattle. Just as we got going nicely, the war in Europe ended and the price of beef dropped very low.

After five years we sold and Will wanted to return to B.C. He had worked very hard and he was not happy with the northern climate. We returned to B.C. and he did carpenter work. Then there was a slump after the war and not much to do so finally decided on the Peace River country and a homestead.

We went to Wembley, Alberta, built a house in town and tried some more carpenter work which seemed to be flourishing then. We did very well for a few years, then the Wapiti country was opening up for homesteaders so decided we would be better off with a farm.

By this time all the good homestead land was taken up and he decided to be a squatter beside quite a nice stream of water, the Iroquois Creek, that went through this land. We moved out in the fall of 1930. He had a log one room cabin built on this land. There were lots of moose and deer in the bush. It was becoming quite settled so we had quite a number of people in the district.

The first winter was not too bad. We had our own fuel for keeping the house warm. It gave my husband something to work at, too. He was restless if he had to be idle. He got out logs to build an additional room or two onto the house and we spent our time peeling the bark off the logs. In the spring we were able to add two more rooms to the cabin. This made it seem more like home. We bought more furniture, too. We had rented our house in Wembley to the school teachers.

When the next winter came we were quite comfortable. Will also built a log barn for the horses. We bought some cows, hens and also horses and were in the farm business again.



Barbara and Mrs. Mercer taken by the house on the homestead.

It was rather lonely until I got my wee girl, Barbara Jean Mercer. She was great company for me and very fond of the horses. It was a worry being so far from doctors, etc. if she should ever get sick. However she grew up so quickly and never seemed to have any trouble in the way of bad colds, etc.



The first Christmas at the Mercer place in 1930. Dad Elford with Russel and Victor, Mrs. Mercer, Bill playing the mouth organ and holding Verna Elford, Vic Elford and Arne Nelson.

When Barbara was coming of school age, we began to puzzle out how we would get her to school. Just about that time my mother-in-law was very sick at Rosedale, B.C. She wanted very much to have Will pay her a visit, so I insisted that he go although he protested very much about it. I insisted he must go and I would get one of the girls who lived along the Wapiti River, to stay with me. I could manage the stock. So finally I got him away to see his mother. She did not live very long after he returned home. I managed the stock and the young girl stayed with Barbara while he was away.

His relatives wanted him to return to B.C. Alex, his elder brother, wanted him to go in for a sheep ranch so we sold our possessions and went back to B.C. We bought a sheep ranch 25 miles from Kamloops. It turned out very well, but Will's health was going and the work was too hard on him, could not always get real good help so we sold again and retired at Rosedale.

Will had been a very great worker and had a good time after retiring. He passed away very suddenly, with a heart attack, on June 12, 1967. I sold the property at Rosedale. For a few years I stayed with Barb as her boys were all attending school and growing up. She was working steady in a grocery store in Kamloops.

I found it very lonely without Will. I was alone most days, with the boys in school and Barb and her husband both working. Then a woman in Chilliwack wrote to me asking if I would move into her house in Chilliwack. It was fully furnished. She did not wish to rent it but was afraid to leave it empty because of so many break-ins. I spent quite a long time in her home, had visits from old friends around here. The Doctors said she would not be able to come back and she had to sell her home. She didn't live long after that. I boarded with someone afterwards. I had my name in for Valley Haven Rest Home but there were quite a few on the waiting list.

One Christmas I went to Kamloops for a week with Barb and family. I returned home and my friend, I was boarding with, was just putting the phone back after talking to someone from Valley Haven. She said, "Oh they have a room for you and I just told them you were in Kamloops." I phoned and said I was here and they had a room for me at last.

It was here that I got acquainted with Alex Fenton. We both liked to walk around the city looking at the baseball games, curling etc. The town hall is quite close. We had some real good times together. He was born in Ireland and is so full of fun. We got to having such good times. He has no relatives here. I was alone too so decided to get married and be Happy Ever After. Now we have had six very Happy Years together and have no regrets. He has had an operation last October so is not as well as he used to be.

Barbara is now a Justice of the Peace. She sent me the notice cut from the paper. I had never known that a woman could be a Justice of the Peace, but it seems they wanted her to have it so she could sign legal papers.

Her three boys are married and there are three grandchildren with more expected.

Jack Penny

by Sarah Penny

Jack Penny and John Plaxton along with Jimmy Thomson, came from Meyronne, Saskatchewan, in 1929 and settled on homesteads in the South Wapiti district. In the fall of 1930, I, Sarah Penny, along with daughter Hazel, came up by N.A.R.

Our homestead buildings were log with sod roof. We cleared the land by hand. While in South Wapiti two more children, Keith and Donna were born.

In the fall of 1934, we moved to the Wembley district closer to school. Two more children were born, Kenneth and Fern.

In 1934 at a rodeo held at Bert Osborne's place, Jack swam the Wapiti River winning first prize of 100 pounds of flour, donated by Alan Watts.



Hazel and Keith Penny and Barbara Mercer going for a ride across the bridge on the Iroquois creek.

Our first picnic at South Wapiti was held at Bill Mercer's home, in 1931. The first church service was held in Clarency Troyer's new log barn. Parties and dances were held in Carl Brooks' home.

Jack and I now have five children, six grandchildren, and one great grandchild. We are now retired and living on an acreage at Richmond Hill. In 1978 we celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary.

John Plaxton

by Nora Ryan

John Plaxton was born in Treherne, Manitoba, in 1888 and lived there until 1929. He, like many others, heard about the great Peace River country and in the fall of 1929 he came to see for himself, along with his brother-in-law, Jack Penny and Jimmie Thomson. They all settled in the South Wapiti district on homesteads, John selecting the SE 6-69-8-W6.

He did a lot of hard work clearing his land with an axe as well as cutting brush for other homesteaders in exchange for breaking his land, as he had no horses nor machinery. He was one of the best neighbors anyone could hope for, always helping someone who needed it. The neighbors in return helped him as well.

In later years John put in a tender each winter for school wood and if he got the bid he cut his wood for the school as well as extra for his neighbors for the use of their team and sleigh to haul his.

A neighbor always put his crop in and cut it in the fall, then John went from homestead to homestead at threshing time, helping all those that would be coming to help thresh his crop.

He was another bachelor who spent many a Christmas Day with the Ryan families. John really liked children and to them there was no one like John. We never thought of babysitters in those days but if it was necessary for the parents to leave the children home they knew they could always depend on John to come and stay with them.

John passed away on November 19, 1948, and was greatly missed by the whole community.

The James Rutledge Family

by Ethel Rutledge

My Dad (Henry Lock) was the caretaker for a cemetery in Portland, New York State. Portland is half way between Buffalo and Erie. As he was caretaker, their house was right beside the cemetery and that is where I was born in 1905.

In a few years we moved to Westfield on to a fourteen acre grape farm. This is where I went to school for the first two years of my schooling. By this time war broke out between France and Germany with England joining with the French. If there was going to be a war, my dad wanted to be under the Canadian flag. Therefore he sold the grape farm and we went to Edmonton by train. Dad found a farm for my two older brothers, Mother and I to live on when he joined the army in 1914. We heard about all the homesteads we could get to prove up in the Peace River district. My older brother went on up to file on one of these homesteads out a few miles from Beaverlodge. We moved in July of 1916 and lived with an uncle of Mother's by the name of Joe Bateman. His homestead was one mile east of the old Halcourt church, which is still standing.

Dad got very crippled up with rheumatism and was sent home before the end of the war. He cancelled a



Ethel and Jim Rutledge and baby Eddie in front of the house.

homestead a few miles east from where we had been living. From that homestead I rode four and a half miles on horseback to Lower Beaverlodge School and Appleton School. When I finished public school, I went to Lake Saskatoon and Grande Prairie for high school. I worked in Mr. Archer's law office in Wembley for three years. This is where I met my husband, R. James Rutledge.

He was raised in Lauder, Manitoba. His family moved to a farm near Wembley in 1927. His dad ran the Massey-Harris implement dealership in town.

The first wedding in the Bentum United Church in Beaverlodge was performed on January 1, 1930. It was a double wedding. My brother, Arthur Lock, married Olive Goldsmith and I married R. James Rutledge.

The first summer we were married, Jim set up machinery for his dad, Bob Rutledge, in Wembley. In 1931 both Jim and his dad filed on homesteads in the South Wapiti district. As soon as a house was built for Bob Rutledge, he started hauling the mail from Wembley and he kept the South Wapiti Post Office.

Jim and I slept in a tent with a stove and a table outside. By winter, we had built a one room shack of logs which we used for a chicken house later. This shack had no floor and the roof was poles and sod. Every time it rained, the rain came right through and so did the mud. We would put our tent up over the bed to keep that dry at least.

In the evenings Jim often sat on the doorstep of our shack and played the mouth organ. The prairie chickens were not used to having anyone around and became very curious to know where that kind of a noise came from. They would keep turning their heads from side to side and taking a few steps closer all the time. I have seen them come up as close as six feet from him playing.

One winter Agnes and Carl Brooks moved back to their farm on the north side of the river. We had many dances



Bob Rutledge and grandson when he ran the South Wapiti Post Office.

in their empty house. The music for these dances was supplied by Jim and Vic Elford taking turns on the mouth organ and Carl Berg and Findlay Watson taking turns on the violin. I also remember dances held at Mercers, Vicklands and Isbergs.

We lived across the river three years. There was no such thing as welfare in those days, but I am sure we as well as lots of the neighbours would have been a lot hungrier if it had not been for Bud Goebel's two dogs. The dogs would find a moose and one dog would stay at the head and the other at the heels of that moose, barking all the time until someone would go and shoot it for them. Those dogs knew very well they would get plenty to eat for awhile as well as the neighbours having meat too. Of course in those days there were no such things as deep freezers. All the meat had to go in sealers in the summer. Then in the winter we put ours on top of the house so the dogs couldn't reach it.

We moved back to Beaverlodge and started buying Dad's farm on crop payments.

In 1946 we moved to Salmon Arm where we lived for four years. In 1950 we moved to Wanham where we lived for fifteen years. Jim started losing his eyesight then so in 1965 we moved into Grande Prairie.

Jim passed away on January 11, 1974. I still live in Grande Prairie.

We have five children. Edwin passed away on July 20, 1939 at the age of six years. Ruby and Mark Meunier live in Red Deer and have three children, Jim, Mark Henri and Marie Louise. Viola and Orville Hingley live at Bonanza, Alberta and have four children, Trent, Sylvia, Carol and Leroy. Gladys and Neil Morrison live at Prince George, B.C. and have two children Brenda and Dean. Jean and Peter Pilch live in Calgary and have two children Stephen and Carla.

The R.J. Rutledge Family

by Ethel Rutledge

Bob and Jessie raised eight children at Lauder, Man. The oldest two were twins, Pearl McConnel and Ruby Hatch, Frances Watson, Herb, Edwin, Mabel Johnson, Evely Wilson, and Jim. They moved to Spirit River in the fall of 1926 and then on to Wembley, the end of steel, in the spring of 1927.

Bob bought three quarters of land east of town, now owned by the Stokke family. Frances and her husband, Tom Watson, Herb, Edwin and Jim all came to Wembley with their parents. Bob ran the Massey Harris implement dealership in Wembley. Edwin and Jim did the farm work. Herb worked in the Bell Flemming Hardware in Grande Prairie.

Bob moved across the Wapiti River in 1931 to homestead. He ran the first Post Office in South Wapiti and hauled the mail from Wembley to A.K. Watts' Pipestone Creek store and the Wapiti Post Office.

They often held church in their house. The minister came out from Grande Prairie to hold the services. Jessie and Bob left the Wapiti district about 1935 to live in New Westminster, B.C. Bob passed away March 10, 1937 at the age of 71.

Jessie re-married but passed away on June 4, 1948 at the age of 71.

Nora Ryan and Family

by Nora Ryan

On September 17, 1929, I came to Dimsdale as Nora Blackbourn, on the train from Edmonton, a 23 hour trip at the time. My sister Edith, her husband, Jim Ryan, and his brother Mike, had the store at Dimsdale and I had come to spend the winter with them from my home in Banff, Alberta. I still live in the north.

In May 1930, Edith and Jim bought cattle and decided to move out to Stoney Meadows, about 30 miles south of



Walter, Gladys and Irene Ryan on snow shoes.

the Wapiti River, south of Wembley. I decided to go with them until they got settled, so bought some cattle too, thinking I could sell them in the fall. Of course none of us knew they would be worth nothing by that fall, so I couldn't afford to leave.

We left Dimsdale May 21, 1930 and went to the Wapiti River. Jim's brother John and an old neighbour from Pollockville, Alberta, Wes McClutchy, who had shipped up some horses and also bought cattle, helped move by taking the cattle and extra horses.

On June 15th, twenty-five days after leaving Dimsdale, we got to the Meadows which was a big lake from all the rain.

Edith and I got back out to town in November of 1931, one and a half years later; and in that time Mrs. Verna Elford was the only white woman we saw. We had some very good Indian neighbours, who kept us supplied with wild game and showed us how to make moccasins. We shot prairie chickens and had lots of wild fruit, but no luxuries.

In November of 1931 we all went out to Grande Prairie by team and sleigh, where John and I were married. We continued to live at the Meadows. Walter was born in Beaverlodge in 1934. In the spring of 1936 just before Irene was born we moved out to the South Wapiti settlement.

We homesteaded the NE 6-69-8 formerly homesteaded by Alfred Heggstrom who had the wall up of a log house and barn. Carl Berg helped with the roof, door, windows and rough lumber floor and we moved in.

John Plaxton was our nearest neighbour joining our ¼ section on the south. We rented his land to grow feed on for our stock. Our first land was cleared by hand and broke with eight horses on a breaking plow. Later we bought SW 8-69-8 which had been homesteaded by Mr. Troyer.



Sunflower grown by Nora Ryan. Gladys and Bobby standing beside it.

We had three more children, Bob in 1938, Gladys in 1940 and Joyce in 1945. Our nearest doctor was in Wembley about twenty-two miles and the nearest hospital in Grande Prairie thirty-five miles.

Sometimes in the summer an Anglican minister would hold services in the school house.

We raised cattle and pigs and what grain we could harvest was fed to them and the chickens. We put up all the hay we could get for the cattle and horses. Our grain and that on John Plaxton's place was cut with a binder and stooked unless the snow came too early. Later of course there were combines.

I stayed on the homestead until all five children were out on their own. Then I moved to Grande Prairie and worked for eight years in Pioneer Lodge before retiring in 1974, when I was lucky enough to get a suite in the home of Gordon and Myrtle Wagner.

Walter, unmarried, lives in Prince George, B.C. Irene married Bob Battensby of Kamloops and is living in Valemount, B.C. with three children. Bob married Yvonne McCullough of Wapiti and farms near Valleyview. They have two children. Gladys married Bert Wold of Buffalo Lake and lives at Valemount, B.C. They have three boys. Joyce married Mansell Koll of Wembley and lives at Sicamous, B.C. They have a girl and a boy.

The James Ryan Family

by Edith Ryan

Jim and I were married in Calgary, on November 11, 1926. We spent the first winter in Bassano, Alberta. Jim and his brothers, Mike and John, hauled ice on wagons from the Bow River, five blocks at a time, to fill ice houses for the hotel, restaurants and places that required ice. The ice was covered over with sawdust to keep it over the summer months. After that Jim owned a little team of drivers so he ran a livery for a time, taking cattle buyers and doctors out in the country.

In the spring of 1927 we moved to Gleichen and Jim and Mike rented a farm. At that time there was a lot of talk about the Peace River country and as we didn't see our way clear to buy land around Gleichen, we decided to move. In the spring of 1928 the boys did a lot of threshing as the snow had come early the fall before.

I went to Banff, where my folks lived, and stayed till after our daughter, Lois, was born on May 26. Lois and I met Jim in Calgary, on June 16 and left for Edmonton. On June 18 we left Edmonton for the Peace River country with one carload of horses and one mixed carload of household goods, two cows and two horses. Mike, Johnny and a neighbor boy, Gordon Cornell, took care of the stock on the way up. It was a long 24 hour trip up on the train to Wembley, the end of steel. Jim bought a shack 14 x 16 and a barn from Al Hoover in Beaverlodge.

On August 24, 1929, we sold the barn and moved to Dimsdale, and went into the store business for awhile. Mike and I ran the Post Office and the store.

During our stay at Dimsdale, several people came on the train that far and as there was no restaurant nor accomodation there they would come up to the house for a meal and sometimes spent the night. Among those that came were Vic and Verna Elford and their three children, Verna, Russell and Victor, John Plaxton, Jack Penny and Jim Thomson. They all settled across the Wapiti later.

Jim was one that always liked more isolated places so hearing about the Stoney Meadows decided to go and

have a look. He and Wes McClutchy took saddle horses and rode over to the meadows. Jim liked it out there as there were big hay meadows and plenty of pasture for stock. He always liked cattle and thought it would be a good place to get a start in them.

After he got home he started buying a few cows here and there. On May 20, 1930 we loaded up the things we needed most onto two wagons and we started out, my sister Nora, Johnny, Wes, Lois two years old, Betty six months, Jim and I.

We stopped and camped the first night at A.K. Watts' at Pipestone Creek. Jim bought a black angus bull from Alan Watts and we left the other cattle there until we built a raft as there was no ferry at that time. On the 24th of May, with the help of Bert Osborne and others, we rafted our stuff across the river. Some of the cattle were led behind the boat, little calves were taken in the boat. The bull was very strong and as soon as it hit swimming water would turn and haul the boat back to shore. After three tries they finally got him across. Ed Elford and Vic were helping and after we crossed in the boat, Ed took Lois on his saddle horse and I took Betty on with me. The hill was very steep and riding horseback seemed better than the wagon. The men hitched four horses to each wagon from the river.



Breakfast at the Wapiti River on May 22, 1930. Johnny Ryan, Jim, Lois, Edith holding Betty and Wes McClutchy in the front.

We camped along the way and got stuck in mud holes many times and had to unload and pull the wagons out and load up again. We usually left something behind to be picked up later. We camped at Bill Mercer's homestead for about a week while the men cut the trails wider and built bridges across the creeks. Bill Mercer's homestead was on the Iroquois Creek.

After we left the Mercer place, we stopped for lunch and let the horses feed on the hill where Elfords built later. It is still called the Elford Hill. We arrived at the meadows on the 15th of June. When we got there the meadow was like a big lake after so much rain. Vic Elford and Bud Goebel came shortly after we did and brought our mail.

We lived in a tent until we got a house up. There was a log house there that we moved up to where we wanted it. The first year we lived in it without a floor, then an Indian, by the name of George Gray, hewed us a floor from jack pine poles. He hewed them on one side. It was rough but was better than the dirt floor. We put another room on for a bedroom and living room. This room had a shiplap floor later. Our beds were made of poles and covered with hay mattresses. Every year at haying time we refilled the ticks with new hay. I don't remember when we got our first beds. We had one crib.

We didn't have many luxuries but didn't mind that as there were lots of strawberries, blueberries, cranberries and dewberries to be had for the picking. There were plenty of fish and what we caught and didn't need for a meal, we canned. We always milked cows so had plenty of fresh milk, butter, cottage cheese and cream.

We had good Indian neighbors like Ed Stoney, Dave Joachim, Pete Chattela, Sam Wilson, Adam and Bapteese Kenny that we could get meat from quite often. We shot partridges too for meat. Once we got a garden patch we grew plenty of vegetables. Anything that grew under ground did well but the more tender stuff froze too early as it was quite frosty there. We dug a good root cellar in which to store the vegetables.

There were no fridges or freezers in those days so the pork was salted and put down in a big wooden barrel. We often put a chunk of moose meat in the brine as well. We fried some of the meat and put it in crocks or cans and covered it with melted butter or lard.

We were short of jars for canning fruit so we took the necks off large wine bottles by wrapping a few rounds of string around the bottle, putting coal-oil on the string and burning it and then turning the bottle over in cold water. The bottle usually broke off quite even. A little rub with some sand paper made the top smooth. We cooked the berries quite thick without sugar and filled the bottles. We then took a square of brown paper, dipped it in skim milk and put it well down the sides and tops of the hot jars. They sealed good and kept real well. There were lots of bottles in a shack that was once owned by a Mr. Bilodeau.

I taught the children by correspondence as they got ready for school. In the fall of 1935 we took some steers and calves out to the Mac Alister place across the river, and fed them. Lois and Betty went to school for about a month at Millarston. We sold the steers in the spring and took the calves back home.

In 1937 we moved out to the Elford place and put the crop and the garden in. There was a beautiful garden spot there that would grow anything without danger of frost. We seeded the field by hand, broadcasting the seed from the back of the wagon. We got a good crop of oats.

In 1939 I homesteaded the SW 32-68-8-W6. We camped there for awhile and did some brushing by hand. There was a very small shack on it so we ate in the shack and slept in a tent. I had no oven to bake bread so often took it to Isberg's or Nora's to bake it. I even baked it in a trench dug in the ground. We never had baker's bread.



Christmas at Jim Ryan's in 1941.
Back row: Jim Ryan, John Ryan, Ed Elford, Carl Berg, John Plaxton holding Gladys Ryan.
Second row: Edith Ryan, Lois, Betty, Mick, and May.
Front row: Walter, Irene, Bobby, Gerald and Ruth.



Threshers at Ted Day's in 1945.
Back row: Anton Berg, John Plaxton.
Sitting: Ted Day, Carl Berg, Jim Ryan and Johnny Ryan.

We often made biscuits or bannock on the campfire. We always had a cow along so had plenty of milk, cream and butter.

In 1942 we bought the SW 17-69-8-W6 from Carl Berg. We moved out in the spring and put a bit of crop in and did some brushing and breaking. Wes Stokke came with a brush cutter and did quite a bit of brushing. Morris and Alphons Lofstrom had a threshing machine and did the threshing for the settlers. The people that had threshing to do would haul bundles. After the crop was off we moved back to the meadows to feed the cattle and trap. May, Michael and Betty stayed on the place and went to school. Jim was back and forth several times a week and often took them home on week ends.

In 1945 we bought the Mercer place, NE 30-68-8-W6 and moved out there. We went to the meadows in the summer to put up hay and hauled it out in the winter.

In 1957 we bought the Nels Remmington place. By that time we were farming with tractors and could farm more land and the boys were old enough to help.

We raised seven children. Lois is married to Alphons Lofstrom and they have two children, Edna, married to Gordon Ingledew and they have two children, Tracy and Gordon, and Jimmy at home.

Betty is married to Mike Mazur and lives at Carrot Creek, Alberta. They have six children. Lawrence, Gerald, Marlene, married to Jeff Lowe and has one boy Cameron, Teddy and Terry (twins) and Marcella.

Michael is married to Margaret Dean and they have five children, Donald, Leona, Barbara, Tom and Patricia.

May is married to Morris Lofstrom and they have two children, Lorraine and Brian.

Gerald married Gloria Murphy and they have one child Brenda.

Ruth married Bruno Sonnenberg and they have three boys, Gilbert, Kenneth and Leslie.

Ken married Laverne McCullough and they have two children, Laurie and Jamie.

Jim passed away September 30, 1966. He had been in poor health for a couple of years. We enjoyed many years together, hard times and good times. I still enjoy good health and still have the Mercer place and live there.

The D.E. Schenk Family

Having moved to South Wapiti in 1958, I do not consider myself being an oldtimer in the district, however we did experience very memorable years in the district.

I was born in Grande Prairie and raised in Rycroft, where my father was employed as a Locomotive Foreman for the Northern Alberta Railway.

In 1951 I started working for the railway in Rycroft shop as a Locomotive Watchman. That summer I was stationed at Wembley with a work train laying ballast and heavier steel west from Wembley. I later became a Locomotive Fireman and worked out of Rycroft, Dawson Creek and McLennan.

During my short stay with the railway, I experienced the last use made of the hand fired locomotive, the conversion to stoker fired and final conversion to oil fired engines.

I left the railway in March to commence duties with the Alberta Forest Service in Grande Prairie on April 5, 1956.

I worked throughout the forest for a year and a half before I was stationed at Woking. In December I transferred to South Wapiti.

It was only a matter of time I realized the Day farm deserved special attention. Bunny and I were married in Wembley, November 5, 1960. We have three children, Carlin born in 1962, Glenda born in 1964, and Laura born in 1968.

We have experienced many changes during our years at South Wapiti and feel it a privilege to have been in some small way a part of it.

On July 14, 1977 we moved to Edson to take duties in the Land Use section with the Alberta Forest Service.



Carlin, Glenda, Bunny, Laura and Dave Schenk at the South Wapiti Ranger Station.

The Charles Sutherland Family

by Audrey Lowe

Charles Sutherland left North Dakota and arrived in Grande Prairie in the fall of 1919. He took up land in the Beaverlodge area and worked around Lake Saskatoon for Ernie Haakinson and others.

He and Mary Gordon were married January 28, 1929 and lived on the farm in Beaverlodge. Charles' dad, C.E. Sutherland lived in their yard, and brother Ivan lived across Hay Lake from them. I was born in 1930.



July 1931. Mary and Charlie Sutherland.

The bottom fell out of prices and in the summer of 1933, Dad had found a homestead south of the Wapiti on the north side of Toad Mountain NW 13-69-8-W6. On this land was five springs. Dad broke a field, put up a barn, corrals, a small house and broke up a garden space.

Our neighbors down on the flats were Percy, Auntie Margaret and Bobby Elliott, Mr. Frank Thornton and a son Earl, Dave and Sadie Taylor and their two little girls Adeline and Noreen. Johnny and Jessie Erskine lived farther up the hill. Jessie named it Toad Mountain.

In the fall of 1934, Muriel was born down at Taylors. The Taylors had moved down to the flats on the north side of the Wapiti river, just above the ferry. Her registered birth place is Pipestone Creek.

Grandpa was living with us and he could never remember Muriel's name so wrote it on a board and nailed it up. He lived with us until his death in January 1935. He always had time to sit and read to me or tell me stories.

Daddy used to take turns with the othe neighbors going over first to Rutledges and later to Herb Riggs' to get the mail.

There was no chance of the school coming to us so we went to the school. Dad made a deal with Dewey Koostra to buy his land. It was only a mile east of the brand new school. Miss Evelyn Harkness asked Mum and Dad to start me to school as there was only one other grade one, Jack (Skooks) Riggs. We were the only ones from that end and lots of mornings in the winter there wasn't much of a trail for two little grade ones to follow.

Dad, along with other settlers used to work on the roads after the crops were in, to help improve the roads and earn some money. He worked on the river hills and corduroys. In the winter he did some trapping and later worked in the sawmills to add to the family income.

All the neighbors helped each other with the threshing. Hoskers brought their threshing machine in the first years, then Lofstroms bought their outfit and did the local work. Man! What excitement when the first bundle team pulled in. They were long days for the men and the women too. One night Dad had been helping thresh and he came home late about 10 o'clock. I went out to help him unhitch, I said to him, "Dad this isn't Trix." Oh yes it is he told me. He and Carl Berg had traded horses out in the field, and he had named the new horse, Trix too.

Dad and Herb Riggs used to put up hay together, on the Isberg meadows, south and east of us. They would be gone up to two weeks, depending on the weather and the hay crop. They'd load the rake, grub box and bed rolls on our wagon and Herb would hook onto the mower and away they would go. Then it was up to Mum and us kids to hold down the fort. They used to come home Friday



1953. Charlie and Mary Sutherland with daughters Muriel and Audrey.

night so Herb could haul the mail on Saturday, then they would go back Monday if they were not done.

Usually there were church services every other Sunday and that was a chance to see the neighbors and do a little visiting.

In the summer Muriel and I used to go to Beaverlodge to spend a week with Uncle Ivan and Aunt May. The train trip was a holiday in itself.

Mum, Auntie Margaret, Dad and we kids used to go out on the sandridges to pick cranberries and blueberries. Quite often Mum would make Muriel's birthday cake and Dad would carry it out to eat in the berry patch. Muriel always said she got gyped out of a party.

After Gerows gave up the Post Office, Dad and Mum took it over, about 1950, and continued until the rural route boxes went in and the mail was brought in from Grovedale. The spring and the fall was always a treacherous time to get across the river when the ice wasn't safe and the ferry wasn't running. Dad and the mailmen before him would get the mail down to the south side of the river by their own vehicle then either walk on the ice or take the row boat to the north side, then hire a vehicle to take them and the mail and maybe some grocery lists into Wembley, pick up the mail and reverse the procedure at the river.

In 1936 Riggs had the first radio in the district and when King Edward abdicated Mum and Dad went across the road to Riggs' at 4 a.m. to listen to the abdication speech.

I finished my High School in Grande Prairie. The Luckey Tree school opened for the first time in 1947 and I was the supervisor of the 23 pupils that attended it. I went on to become a teacher and after teaching at Aspen Ridge came to Beaverlodge to teach. Here I met and married Joe Lowe. Joe works for Fosters Seeds and is an active Legion Member and I in the Legion Auxiliary.

We have two children, Lynnette a C.N.A. in the university in Edmonton. Charles (Chuck) is graduating this year, 1979, and plans a field in communications.

Muriel finished her High School in Spirit River. She supervised one term at the South Wapiti School, then went to work in the Grande Prairie Post Office. Later she worked as a telephone operator at Olds. She married Jim Olson of Athabasca, and they followed the oil fields, even to spending a year and a half in Iran. They are now settled in Spruce Grove. They have three children, Garry who graduated in 1978 and is now out on his own. Bonnie is in grade ten and Gordon who is four.

In 1968 Mum and Dad sold the farm to Topleys and moved to Hythe. There they renewed old acquaintances and made many new friends, but they really enjoyed it when the "Wapiti Folks" dropped in. When Wapiti got the phone in they used to phone across the river to catch up on the news.

Mum is in the Auxilliary Hospital in Grande Prairie. Dad passed away in September, 1978.

The Dave Taylor Family

by Sadie Taylor

We went across the river in 1933. We stayed all night at the Wapiti river in a cabin. We had our children Adeline and Noreen. Dave and his brother stayed up most of the night cutting wood to keep us warm. The children used our oatmeal sacks for pillow cases, as it came in sacks in those days. We started out the next day with all our earthly goods in a hay rack. We will never forget that ride - dodging stumps and making roads. We were guided as far as Bud Goebel's, they lived by Carl and Clay Brooks' turn off, and then went on alone to Percy Elliott's where we received a warm welcome and were invited to stay all night. The Elliotts were going to a dance. After a tasty bear meat supper, we went to bed and stayed there until the folks came home from the dance. We got up and they went to bed.

The next day we were at our own place. Assar Vicklund, Percy and Margaret came down, and dug a hole in the middle of the shack and with water from the muskeg made mud and chinked the shack. We cut our wood from a beautiful tamarack swamp. Dave also traded tamarack posts to Mr. Watts for groceries, and he sold them to other farmers.

Dave and Bud trapped and hunted together, then Olive or I would pack our kids and belongings and tie the cow behind and go stay with the other one.

Dave made a trunk for Frank Brewer's car. He was paid $12 for it. He gave me the $12 to file on the homestead next to his. I went to Grande Prairie and made the mistake of filing in another township 12 miles down the river. Today it is a great oil field.

The second year we were there we had no sleigh to go to the Christmas concert so we turned our kitchen table upside down, put a blanket in and away we went.

Next spring Dave went to work for Wapiti Bill in his sawmill. We were in a shack on the bank of the Wapiti where the Pipestone Creek empties into it. There is where I, with God's help, ushered Miss Muriel Sutherland into the world.

When Adeline was school age we moved to Beaverlodge, where John, Lucille and Bill were born. When war broke out we moved to Dawson Creek where Donna was born.

We have four daughters and two sons. Adeline is Mrs. Vernon Tyms, Edmonton. Noreen is Mrs. Joe Blackerman, Edmonton. John is in Campbell River, B.C. Lucille, Mrs. Tom Simpson lives in Calgary. Bill is in Calgary. Donna, Mrs. Even Ernst, is in Edmonton.

We celebrated our Golden wedding anniversary January 26, 1978. We are retired and live in Edmonton.



1976. Len and Sadie Taylor with their family.

Frank and Son Earl Thornton

Mr. Thornton and son, Earl, came into the South Wapiti district and settled in the east part of the settlement before Elliotts or Sutherlands. Two other children, Jean and Doug, did not accompany them. Leith later moved into the west end of the district.

Mr. Thornton always had a big well-cared for strawberry patch, and he made real good bread.

Their main means of travel was horse back. Mr. Thornton always rode a big grey stallion called Chubb. He was a very dignified man.

Earl joined the Ambulance Corps in the early 40's and served in the Italian campaign. When he was discharged he and his English war bride, Eileen, settled in Bowness. He lived there until his death several years ago.

The Leith Thornton Family

by Joan Thornton

We moved south of the Wapiti River in 1939 and looking back the memories are good. We always had lots to eat and lots of fuel. We lived on the Mercer place, just at the south west edge of the homestead country.

We had our own sawing rig, and the McCullough boys used to come and help us saw the wood. We also had our own grain grinding outfit so we were plenty well off in our own eyes. We had eggs all winter long as Leith used to hang two coal oil lanterns in the chicken house, (couldn't afford gas ones), consequently we got quite a few eggs, even some to trade at Watts' store. Ordinarily the days are so dark and short in winter the hens can usually just get enough to sustain themselves.

At night when we went out to the barn full of stock, with the lantern burning and the smell of hay and horses munching their oats, that's as close to heaven as I'll probably ever get.

Bev was in grade three and Richard was in grade four when they started school in Wapiti. They had both started school in Kinuso and had spent some time at the Aspen Ridge school. They rode horseback in the summer. In the winter they drove a small one-horse caboose Leith had made; there was no stove in it. Leith went to the school and put up a small building just big enough for Nellie, the horse. We had to go see the teacher as some of the boys used to tease the horse by poking sticks at her legs and as she was shod they could have been badly hurt.

One of the highlights was when the kids got their tonsils out at Pipestone Creek. There were lots of tents, doctors and nurses. Leith put a mattress in the bottom of the wagon box for the kids to ride home on. They were pretty sick kids as it was a long way from Pipestone Creek to the Mercer place. I had a custard made for them as there was no ice to make ice-cream.

Leith had a trapline and shot squirrels to make ends meet. The kids and I also had a short trapline where we caught weasels. One time Leith did not get out to his line so he sent Richie on horseback, and as I said Richie wasn't very big. In one trap there was a mink or fisher, some people said it was too big for a mink. It was still alive, so Richie killed it with a stick. It was a very dangerous animal and a bite could go right to the bone and a kid could go into shock. Anyway Richie came home proud as punch. Leith got some foxes and coyotes as well as weasels and squirrels so we seemed to manage pretty well.

We never had to go on relief until Percy Elliott said the government wanted some bridge timbers and for Leith to be sure to go to town to get a permit to get some out. Leith went in to see Policeman Cook to apply for a permit. Cook asked him if he was on relief. Leith said he wasn't. Cook said it was only for people on relief, so Leith said I'm going on right now. Cook was mad as he didn't want the bother of making out the papers. Anyway he gave Leith a voucher for $8, $5 for Leith and $1 for each of us. That is all the relief we ever had. Believe it or not when the government sent the cheque for the timbers they took the $8 off.

One time Leith had a close call. He was two miles from home with the team and sleigh getting logs out of the muskeg. He had loaded up and was starting for home when his leg broke through the crust up to his thigh. He stopped the horses. He had them trained so they stopped immediately when he said "Whoa". The back stake, where he was walking, broke and the logs rolled and hit him on the knee. The sleigh froze down and the logs rolled off. He unhooked the horses and just hung on to the lines and finally got home in great pain. I rubbed his knee with liniment and wrapped it so tightly in flour sacks it was just like a splint. I don't think anything was broken but he had a sore knee for a long time. It bothered him off and on for years.

Richie died in July 1976 of a heart attack. He had no children. His widow lives in Calgary and has been a very good daughter-in-law to us.

Bev's husband was killed in a car accident in 1963, Leith was almost killed in the same accident. He spent 98 days in the Lion's Gate Hospital in North Vancouver and a year at the J.F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre.

Bev has four children. Marjory will be 27 in January and is a nurse, she was married to a Chinese doctor on December 3, 1977. They are expecting their first baby in February. Bill was 25 in September of 1978. He teaches retarded children. He is marrying a Chinese girl March 24, 1979. Laura will be 23 in January 1979, and Kerry will be 21 in April of the same year. They are both single and fancy-free.

Bev has had an accounting office in Langley for years, but last summer she bought a home for adult retarded in Cloverdale, three miles from Langley. There are ten inmates. Kerry quit her job with an American Finance company to help Bev in the office. Laura also worked for the same finance company and has given her notice. She will take over Bev's accounting office with help from Bev and Kerry at income tax time.

Bev, Bill, Laura and Kerry are very active in the Glad Tidings Evangelical Temple.

Leith and I are now living in Chase, B.C.

The Clarence Troyer Family

by Martha Troyer

Clarence and I were married in November, 1918, and lived at Fleet, east of Castor, Alberta, on a farm for about eight years. We had five children, Bessie, Ensly, Bertrum, Muretta and Peter.

In 1930, we decided, with several others, to make the trip to spy out land in the Peace River country. Six of us were travelling in a nice new car. The driver was Rudolph Lemkie. All went well till we overtook a truck ahead of us. We could not pass, so had to unload the truck, get it out, then reload again. As we talked, the lady kept saying, "Clarence don't you know me?" She recognized him after all those years. She had been his first teacher, Mrs. Styles. She was married, had three children and was heading for the Peace River country.

We came through Smith where we crossed the Athabasca by ferry, to Slave Lake and McLennan. Part of the road, cut through timber for about twelve miles, was mud to no end. Many cars were stuck and had to be pulled out by team. We decided to drive along the railroad track rather than have the new car pulled apart, hoping the train, which was slow, would not arrive while we travelled those four miles to where we could get back on the road again. Anyone having false teeth would likely have lost them with the bumps.

Arriving at Grande Prairie, we came to the Graber home, my folks, where we stayed. They had moved to the Peace about two years before and bought land.

In the spring of 1930 we moved in with Rudolph Lemkie, near Wembley. He was a bachelor. Clarence worked for him, helping him farm south of Wembley for that year.

While there we went over the Wapiti River eight miles, to file on a homestead and build a cabin to live in while building a house. This 12 x 18 cabin was to be the hen house later. Rudolph also took a homestead.

In 1931, the first of May, we packed all our things and moved across the river to settle in our new cabin. That night we set up the beds and stove to have heat, and went to bed. The next morning we awoke to find twelve inches of snow on the ground. The cabin was cheaply built with slabs for the floor. To set up the table we had to be sure the legs didn't go through the cracks.

Clarence got logs 28 feet long to make a house 28 x 28. Eric hued them on the one side for the inside and later another neighbor, John Isberg, tongue and grooved them. He also helped build the house. He did a wonderful job. We had no partitions yet but were glad to get the shiplap flooring. It was a warm home with a potbelly stove and lots of wood. We kept the floors clean by putting lye in the water and used a broom to scrub the floor.

Clarence often went out across the river to work. I stayed home with the family. We shared many things with neighbors.

In 1933 our youngest son, Peter was born. I intended to go to Grande Prairie but didn't make it, so had to be delivered at home. Clarence was the doctor. He took the doctor book and followed the instructions and an eight pound boy arrived. We didn't have coal oil so had to get some. Eric happened to be the one we depended on. He also went and got the midwife, Mrs. Isberg. After that some other women decided to stay home. We were called on to help another woman who said, "If Mrs. Troyer can stay in, I can too."



Clarence Troyer and family on the homestead.

Being the first time for me to be midwife I said, "We always pray about problems." She said, "Go ahead do as you feel," and we did. That baby was born in twenty minutes time and all went well. I had my husband with me as witness. Another woman did the same. Her husband came for me when the baby was already born. He didn't tie the cord properly, so the baby was already weak from loss of blood. We retied the cord and it began to gain strength. We called that girl our little dark haired baby. She is living today.



Troyer's car travelling on the tracks to avoid getting stuck in the mud along Slave Lake.

There was no church or preacher near, so we decided to have Sunday school and service in our home. We also gathered in homes for prayer meetings. When Brother Waterman came to Grande Prairie, we asked him to come and speak to us. Other ministers also ministered to our needs.

The Indians were good to us. If we needed meat they would shoot it and Clarence would pull it out of the bush so we always had meat.

We had to haul most of our feed from across the river. One winter Clarence made a trip every other day with four horses on a big rack, 15 miles for a trip. At times the river was dangerous. One morning Clarence crossed the river alright. Coming back at night a log was rolled across the trail. Someone had tried to cross and slid into the channel with a sleigh full of groceries. The team was safe though. They had made sure no one else would try to cross. They all stayed that night at a friend's place trying to dry out the bedding.

The odds were often against us and we had no money. We shared with neighbors when needed. Finally, one morning we decided to have prayer and believe God would meet our need. (We always had family prayer in the mornings.) I had baked the last batch of bread. Clarence went out to hitch up the team to the wagon. The oldest girl was able to stay with the family. We trusted in God on our 18 mile drive of faith to the nearest store, with not even a penny. We had read in the Bible, God would supply all our needs and we depended on that word being true. We drove over rough roads and crossed the river to get to the town of Wembley. About a quarter of a mile from town, a man was coming toward us, his hand in his pocket. We knew him as he was a homesteader too, but he didn't know our desperate situation. As we stopped to say, "Hello" he reached his hand out to me and said, "Here you might need this." Then he went and I looked, and there was a five dollar bill. We were able to get flour and the things we needed. What a rejoicing for

the answer to our prayer! It pays to pray and let God lead. We have trusted Him ever since.

In 1936 or so we decided to move out after the loss of the crop that year. We sold the homestead, loaded our things onto two sleighs and the boys drove the cattle. We got to the river and the ferry had been shut down because of too much slush. We called to the ferry man. He was kind enough to try once more and got us across.

Later we moved into Grande Prairie, where Clarence took on dray work for about ten years. The wages were low, $2.50 a day. Many times Clarence shovelled coal all day. The children went to school.

We then decided to move to B.C. and have been here for thirty years, never had it so good. Our family all live here except one daughter that lives in Vancouver.

The Foster Van Schaick Family

by Irene Varty

Foster Van Schaick was born at Camrose, Alberta in 1907. In 1911 he came, with his parents and three older brothers, to Grande Prairie, Alberta, where they homesteaded on Richmond Hill. They travelled to Grande Prairie over the Edson Trail.

In 1932 Foster married Marie Brooks who had been born in Huntville, Washington, later moving with her family to Twin Falls, Idaho. In 1917 she travelled by train, with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Flavius Brooks, an older sister and brother and two younger sisters to a homestead near Pipestone Creek.

After their marriage in 1932, Marie and Foster homesteaded at South Wapiti on the W½-6-69-8-W6 along the Iroquois Creek. They farmed in the summer and spent several winters working for various mills in the area; Kopps, McCulloughs, Len Robertson and Jim Woods.

In 1942 Foster, working for Carl Brooks' outfit, packed supplies in the Yukon for the Canol Project. In 1950 they moved to Grande Prairie.

Marie and Foster had three children, Irene, Patricia and Douglas.

Irene married H.T. (Bert) Varty, who was fire ranger at South Wapiti from 1950 to 1957. They have four children, Tommy, David, Cynthia and Darlene.

Patricia married J. Donald Houston and has six children, Sandra, Greg, Wendi, Jodi, Dean and David. They now reside in Calgary.

Douglas married Patricia Smith and has five children, Chrystal, Foster, Shelagh, Laura and Carol. They now reside in Grande Prairie.

The H.T. Varty Family

H.T. (Bert) Varty was born in Chauvin, Alberta, but spent most of his childhood at his parents sawmill west of Rimbey, Alberta. In 1939 he joined the P.P.C.L.I., being discharged in 1945 after being in England, Italy, France and Holland. In 1949 he joined the Alberta Forest Service in Grande Prairie. In 1950 he became the Ranger at South Wapiti. In 1951 he married Irene Van Schaick and two sons were born, Tommy and David. In 1957 Bert was promoted to chief ranger in Grande Prairie. Later two daughters, Cynthia and Darlene completed their family.

They are now retired in Winlaw, B.C.

Assar Vicklund

by Nora Ryan

Assar Vicklund was born in Sweden and came to Canada in 1929. He homesteaded in the South Wapiti district in 1930, on NW 14-69-8-W6. For a few years he went to Edmonton to work in the winter months, coming back to his homestead in time for spring work. He also worked for a time for Herman Trelle, the World Wheat King, at his farm near Wembley, sorting seed grain for the big World Fairs where Mr. Trelle won his awards for wheat and oats.

Assar spent many a Christmas Day with the two Ryan families along with other bachelors of the community. He really enjoyed playing Norwegian Whist and didn't restrict his visits just to Christmas.

The South Wapiti Community was saddened to hear of Assar's tragic death which resulted from a tractor accident on his farm on October 9, 1960. It is believed he fell from the moving tractor and was dragged some distance by the plow before being thrown free. The injured man managed to stop the runaway tractor, then drove it about two miles to the home of a neighbor and was rushed to the hospital in Grande Prairie where he passed away the next morning.

The Tom Watson Family

by Ethel Rutledge

Frances and Tom Watson first homesteaded south west of Beaverlodge. In 1932 they moved across the Wapiti to live on a homestead for Frances. They had two girls Roberta Fleming and Betty Haugen. Tom and Frances have both passed away. The two girls live in Edmonton. Roberta has a son Bobby and a daughter Mary Anne. Betty Haugen and Harvey have three children, Tom, Leigh and Rick.

Roberta's husband passed away on July 12, 1970. Betty's husband works in an office for Alberta Government Telephones.



When the Peace River Country was cut off from the outside by floods in 1936. These cars were waiting to get on a scow to take them to Kinuso.



Berry picking along the Wapiti are W.C. Dillon, Trixie South and Eva Dillon - 1912.



W.A. Dillon and neighbor Mrs. Watson about 1913.



Carl Brooks, Ted Chambers, Alex Monkman and Shorty McGinnes ready to leave Rio Grande, first party to Blaze a trail to Hansard through the Monkman Pass.



George Stephen's coal-hauling outfit used in the 30's. Walter MacAlister, Sr. is the man in this picture.



The Stokke teams hauling stones to load on flat cars at Wembley to go to Watino to reinforce the bridge when the river was flooding.



Fosters drilling a well on Stephenson's farm in 1928. This well is still in use today (1980).

Chapter 12: Wembley



Wembley

The history of Wembley began when transient free traders started operation at the west end of Saskatoon Lake in 1896 to compete with the Hudson's Bay trading post at the fork of the trails 12 miles to the north. Land around Wembley was surveyed for homesteads in 1909, settlers beginning to arrive in 1910. The railroad survey was completed from Grande Prairie to Pouce Coupe in 1916 and the townsite of Wembley was surveyed in 1923. The steel arrived in 1924.

The present townsite is four and a half miles south of the original hamlet of Lake Saskatoon and when the steel arrived in 1924 the Local Board of Trade decided to change the name from Saskatoon Lake to Wembley, after Wembley, England where an international exhibition was then showing.

Wembley reached village status January 3, 1928. George Finch was the first Mayor. After the townsite was surveyed in 1923 and before the steel arrived in 1924, enterprising merchants, foremost among whom Robert Kranz, made plans for the erection of businesses and houses, and a real estate agent began a busy season. The



Wong inside cafe.



Moving a home from old Lake Saskatoon to Wembley in 1925.

winter of 1924-25 saw many buildings hauled over the four and one half miles of snow-covered trails to their new foundations in Wembley.

The village lies on the south side of the railway, fourteen miles west of Grande Prairie and one mile south of Highway Two. The following are some of the businesses, recreation etc., for the new village in the first years, with apologies for any we have overlooked:

Two churches, United and Anglican. A 12-room hotel built by a Mr. Lord. A rooming house owned and operated by Jorgen Johnson.

Two hardware stores - George Neilson's moved from Lake Saskatoon, and Bunyan Hardware, built by Bromley in 1928 and sold to Bunyan in 1929. Elliot became a partner with Bunyan in 1932. They also purchased and operated a hardware in Hythe.

The Post Office with Mrs. Sinclair as postmistress. Butcher shop - Tom Dancey moved the building from Lake Saskatoon in 1925, and it later burned. George Bissett later operated a butcher shop.

Bank of Commerce which was the old Revillon store building from Lake Saskatoon. Blacksmiths - Ernie Tyler, Jim Woods, Jim Rickerby, Bill Moss.



Mel Gorgichuk operating crane at the new Rec-Plex.

A drug store operated by Forest Rogers. Ladies' wear owned by Mrs. Harold followed by Mrs. Little, then Mrs. Palmer. General Stores run by Harold Oxley, Bob Kranz and S.H. Riggs. The latter's building was bought by Cecil Young and moved one block south to become the Young's residence. It is now the farm home of Justyn and Eva Rigby.

Three livery barns, one built by Bob Nevans and later sold to Matt Graham, the two others run by Slim Finch, and Rex Ireland. Police - Alberta Provincial Police until 1928-1929, then becoming Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Three poolrooms.

Community Hall built of lumber salvaged from the Diamond P Store at Lake Saskatoon. Later it was improved by Bell Brothers. Tennis Club and Badminton Club. Curling Rink with two sheets of natural ice.

Four elevators with total capacity 290,000 bushels: Alberta Pacific built in 1924, agent A.P. Maloney; United Grain Growers built in 1925, agent Wallace Edgar; Alberta Wheat Pool built in 1927, agent Bill Feist; Midland Pacific built in 1929, agent Boyd Johnson.

Implement Agents: John Deere, George Neilson; Cockshutt, Jim Castleman, Bert Bromley, Reg Bunyan; International Harvester, Jack Crummy, Bill Bell, Jim Cochrane, Lorney Purves, and Bill Palmer; Massey Harris, Robert Rutledge, Noel McLean, Pitchko's, Bunyan, Oliver, and William Kastner.

Dray Service; Robert (Dinty) Moore, C. Ward (who also had a harness shop), Ivor Larson (who also was the steam man on the "Big 7"), Fred Coe, George Anton, Frank Unger.



Sherman transported Dr. Carlisle across the Wapiti, south of Wembley, to visit his patients in this vehicle.

Oil Agents: Imperial Oil, Boyd Johnson, Bob Newcomb; British American, Wallace Edgar, Bill Bell and Cochrane, Bill Palmer, Martin Hein; Union, Oxley.

Shoe repair shop run by J. Thibideau. There was Wong's cafe and Mrs. I. Larson had a tea room. Lawyers were W.F. (Bulldog) Smith, and Jack Archer. Clarence Grubb, and Henry Rollin ran the barber shop. Undertaker was Charles Purcell.

The following was taken from the Northern Tribune, April 13, 1933: The Western Hotel which was built in 1926 by Jorgen Johnson and discontinued to do business some two years ago has been bought by the Frontier Lumber Company and is in the process of being removed to be used for other purposes.



Kranz dry goods department in 1941. Ida Rollin, Isabelle Kennedy, Margaret Taylor were the clerks.



Recognize any of these people sitting at the drug store counter in 1941?

The commodious Wembley Hotel which was the first hotel in town, now under the proprietorship of Jack B. Goyne, is still noted for its good meals and courteous accommodation. The dining room operated by Mr. and Mrs. I. Larsen had been taken over by Mrs. Brown of Halcourt. Larsens have moved to the house on Front Street recently occupied by Mr. and Mrs. R. Knight.

The first spectacular fire in its history was on February 7, 1933. A pool room and contents burned to the ground. It was jointly owned by Andrews, Boychuk, and Zarsky who are presently living in Southern Alberta. It has recently been operated by Tony Melynchuk. Estimated loss was $4,000. The buildings in the rear, also Henry Rollin's home and the schools all came very close to being victims of the blaze. Only through the undaunted efforts of the men with snow shovels and snow was further destruction prevented.

The greatest single loss that could come to Wembley came last Saturday, February 23, 1933 when the Wembley Flour Mill owned and operated by Robert Kranz was burned to the ground at a total loss of $18,000, covered by only $4,000 insurance. The mill hands closed



Main street of Wembley in the thirties.

up at 10:30 Saturday night. Two hours later the fire was discovered. Adjacent to the flour mill were two store houses filled with wheat and flour, all of which were lost except one hundred sacks of flour which men were able to throw out. Destroyed were 650 sacks of flour, 50-100 pound sacks of wheatlets, 500 bushels of oats, 2600 bushels of wheat, $275 worth of supplies (sacks, etc.) and over $200 worth of carpenters tools. The origin of the fire was unknown. The building had been built in 1931. Mr. Kranz had the previous summer made his last addition to it, installing at the same time a centrifugal flour sifter, thus enabling the mill to produce the best quality flour.

Gleanings over the years, taken from the Northern Tribune through the kindness of Isabel Campbell. Thursday, March 8, 1934 - Born to Mr. and Mrs. S.R. Lowe at the Wembley Maternity Hospital February 26, a son. March 22, 1934 the following births were recorded at the Wembley Maternity Home at the beginning of the week. Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Walton a daughter March 19. Mr. and Mrs. Jas. McFadden, a daughter March 20.

The Ladies Aid presented our new maternity hospital with a baby bassinet. Mr. MacLean made the bassinet and the ladies met at the home of Mrs. Edgar and made the furnishings.

September 17, 1950 saw another big fire in Wembley. Dzaman's Garage, McCordick's Meat Market and locker, Davis Shoe Repair Shop, Purves' new pool room, and Tom's General Store. To the north it spread to the home of A.P. Funk; Grubb's barber shop escaped with some damage. Entirely without fire fighting equipment, the village of 300 people called for help from Beaverlodge, Grande Prairie, and the Royal Canadian Air Force from the Grande Prairie Airport. Local residents hauled water and a bucket brigade was formed. Only a shift in the wind saved the Hotel and Mitchell's General Store. Davis and Yakimchuk both had their homes on the premises.

A blaze June 18, 1953 levelled a pool hall and cafe owned by Clarence Grubb and damaged a garage next to the Mitchell Department Store. Wembley's volunteer firemen were augmented by a detachment from Grande Prairie. More than three hours after the blaze broke out, the pool room and cafe were levelled.



House on left is Rupp's, on right Ward's house.

The most recent fire was that of the Wembley General Store in May of 1979; the R. Kranz store which held its spot for more than fifty years was gutted by the blaze.

Fires took a large toll of the businesses in the village over the years. It wasn't until 1957 that water and sewer services were made available to the residents. The first fire truck was on loan from the County of Grande Prairie and the village had to sign an agreement with the County of Grande Prairie that they would attend any fires in the surrounding area. In the mid sixties the village was in financial position to buy their own fire truck. Martin Hein made a trip to Saskatoon to drive back the new truck. This greatly improved our capabilities to contend with the fires in the village. We have at present 12 regular volunteer firemen.



Mel Gorgichuk operating crane to dismantle the Wembley Water Tower.

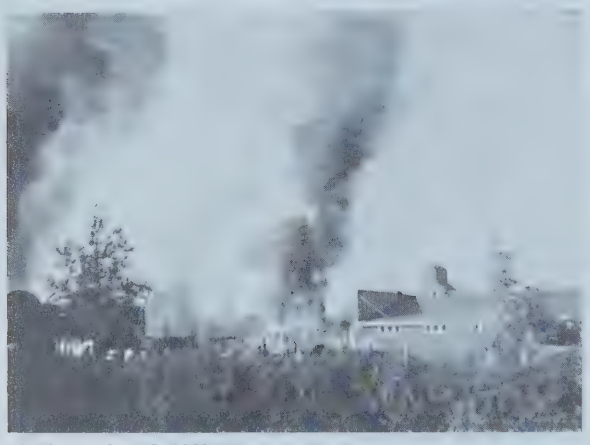


George Gilmour about 1927.

The village of today is undergoing many changes both commercial and residential, the population being over 1,000. A new village office was completed in 1978, with offices for the doctors from Beaverlodge who provide their services three times a week. The Health Unit holds



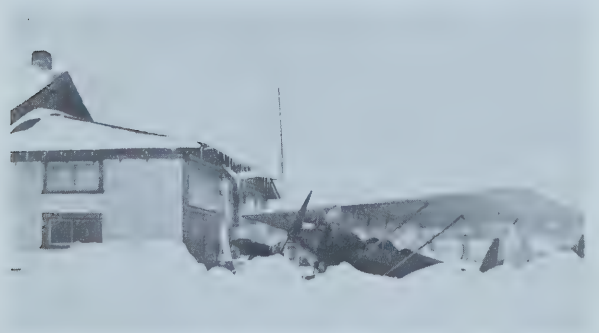
View from top of elevator, 1939.



Fire September 17, 1950.



Shower for Bonnie Carlisle, Mrs. Rolly Wood, Jean McFarlane, in 1923.
Back row: Rev. Findley, Mrs. Neilson, Mrs. Yates, Jean Taylor, Mrs. Archer, Mrs. Findley, Mrs. Cranston.
Front row: Mrs. Sara Wood, ? ?, Mrs. Roland, Mrs. Gilmour, Bonnie Carlisle, Mrs. R. Woods, Jean McFarlane, Mrs. Albert Smith, Velma Cranston.
Seated: Mrs. Art Smith.
Some of these ladies later moved to Wembley from Lake Saskatoon.



Henry Stokke and his plane in the 1940's.

clinics twice a month and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce provides banking services one day a week with a new building of their own in the planning stages. Natural gas services were made available to us in October 1979. A new cement block office building was erected in 1979 across from the hotel with the prospects of a Q-Mart and recreation room opening soon.

Businesses in Wembley at present are: United Farmers of Alberta Co-op Service Station and bulk plant, Wembley Hotel, TV Korner, Beauty parlor, Green Dell confectionary and restaurant, Post Office, Automotive garage, seed cleaning plant, and electrical contracting. There are numerous private businesses around the area - welding services, sod farm, janitorial services, trucking enterprises, construction firms. Farming plays a big part in the community as well, with the Alberta Wheat Pool being the only elevator left in Wembley with a capacity of 170,000 bushels.

As we head into the 1980's the future looks bright indeed. The census of May 1980 showed a population of 1119, as a result Wembley was granted Town status effective August 1, 1980. The people will now elect the Mayor, and he will have six councillors to assist him.

Wembley being close to Grande Prairie, is very attractive to many people who don't like living in larger centres to purchase homes here and commute to work. Paving of the whole town, which should be completed this fall, along with our present natural gas and water and sewer services, gives us the three main facilities of larger communities.

Residential construction is growing much faster than commercial at present. Many new homes, several duplex, and some apartment buildings are in various stages of completion. A new Westview Baptist Church is proposed for the near future, with Rev. Bob Krahn, with wife Dawn, as Pastor. The Q-Mart convenience store is now open in the new cement building across from the Hotel. The Bank of Commerce will open here as well, until their new building is ready possibly by 1982. Construction has started on the new laundry-car wash-gas bar complex, north of the railway tracks. They are in the process of adding a new cement block gymnasium and library, plus two portable school rooms, to the present school complex. There are hopes of a new Post Office in 1981; the present facility is bulging at the seams. The number of patrons served from this office is approximately 700 now, more than triple what it was six years ago.

The sporting facilities in town are to receive a shot in the arm as well. The Agricultural Society, which was formed in the early 1970's, for the purpose of getting a recplex facility for the town and district, is now in the process of installing artificial ice in the arena part, to go with the curling rink which has had artificial ice since it opened in the mid 1970's. The fencing and landscaping is completed on the new recreation park on the east side of town. This park will contain ball diamonds, tennis courts, a track for bicycles and track and field enthusiasts, horseshoe pits, lawn bowling, and play areas for the younger set.

The last two years has seen the face of the town change every week, and there is no sign of it being any different in the future. The summer of 1980 saw the streets being paved, a welcome sight. I hope when we look back in a few years from now, we can be as proud of this boom stage, as the early pioneers must have been in the 1920's, and who are largely responsible for what we have today. We all owe them a big thank you.

Canadian Bank of Commerce

The Canadian Bank of Commerce was opened in Wembley and absorbed the business of the Lake Saskatoon branch on June 15, 1925, with F.W. Yeats as manager. It operated here until May 31, 1935, when business was transferred to Beaverlodge.



The Canadian Bank of Commerce, Wembley 1926.

The building had been the Revillon Freres Trading Company store at Lake Saskatoon, moved to Wembley and located on lot 25, block four on the west side on main street.

Mr. Yeats was manager from 1925 to 1926; H.T. Lamont 1926-1931, and J.L. Kerr from 1931-1935.



John L. Kerr at bank in Wembley, 1930.

Some of the people who worked in the bank were; Hugh Mortimer, Alex Mitchell, Leslie Price, A. Earl Norris, Harold Ardley, and Mary Hallot.

After the bank was moved to Beaverlodge, the building was used for a cafe, and later a pool room and barber shop was operated by Clarence Grubb. The building burned down in the big fire of 1953.

On May 12, 1977 a sub-agency was opened for business.



Hugh Mortimer.

Northern Alberta Railway

by Maurice Mahood

W.T. Turner was the first Northern Alberta Railway agent in Wembley arriving in late October, 1924, on the first train.

I believe the next one was Mattie (Mr. Matthews and for the life of me I can't recall his first name. He was always called just "Mattie"), and was followed by Vince Talbot (older brother of Don) and then I came in the fall of 1928. On the same train that I was on, going to Wembley there was relief for Vince, a French-Canadian called Albert Berube. And he was a character!



N.A.R. Station.

The office was small. There were two wobbly chairs to sit on and, since we had a couple of auditors auditing the station at the same time, we were sitting on apple boxes while they luxuriated on the wobbly chairs.

Came Sunday morning and Berube said to me: "Let's go to the shed, Maurice. I noticed a pile of broken chairs

in the far corner. I am a good carpenter. We'll get those chairs down and I'll fix them and we will have something decent to sit upon."

Now this was early October. The elevators were just across the tracks. Berube was standing in the middle of the shed as I reached up and pulled at the top of the pile. Immediately everything from the pile collapsed over the shed floor and the air was filled with agonizing screams. I looked around and there was Berube, his pant legs hauled up above his knees, yelling his head off and looking through glazed eyes at about 30 field mice that were scampering around in all directions on the floor of the shed!

I'm rambling. Berube was only there a few weeks (albeit an adventure-laden few weeks) when Holden (Harry) Swift came to take over the station on a permanent basis. I was just there for a couple of months and then traded jobs with Jack Swift, (Harry's brother) who was at Grande Prairie. Jack was anxious for wire practice as he was almost ready for promotion to agent. Grande Prairie did not give him much opportunity for this and at Wembley he thought he would have plenty of chances to work the wire for his brother. When he got there he found he was far too busy with his own work to get much time on the "wire".

Bill Dzaman was, for a time, my section foreman when I was agent at Fairview. He was quite a Bill, he had been foreman for many years at Wembley, following a man by the name of Eriksen there in about 1929. Bill died a few years ago after retirement in southern B.C.

I'm not sure who followed Harry into Wembley. It may have been Don Talbot, but I think there was - yes, of course, there was, my good friend Jack Hardie - and then I believe it was Don, then Bill Donlevy followed by Clarke McCoombs. Clarke left the National Alberta Railway soon after the end of the war, when he was agent at Pouce Coupe, and went to the Southern Pacific Railway in San Diego because the climate there banished his arthritis which had come to be a problem when he was living in the north.

Clarke was followed by Harry Korsmo, who was at Wembley for a short time only, then there was Vic Spurgeon, Maurice Ouimet, and Basil Driver. Basil was agent when the Wembley station was closed in 1970.

The R.C.M.P. in our Area - Wembley, Alberta

In 1924 the railway steel pushed 12 miles westward from Grande Prairie and the new town of Wembley was born.

The first police officer to serve the new town was Corporal C.A. Martin, 1924-1925. He was followed by Constable Jack Light who came from an RCMP family and whose father was an RCMP officer in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Constable E.E. Buchanan served in Wembley from 1927 to 1932 and became an RCMP in that year. Sergeant Herb Cook took over duties in the deep depression days of 1932 and served until World War II when he purchased a store in Wembley and made his home there.

Constable L.L. Davey was the last RCMP to serve in Wembley from 1932-1942 when the barracks was permanently closed. Our area is still served by RCMP officers from the Grande Prairie detachment.

We are very pleased with our association with the RCMP in the past century and are looking forward to the future.

St. Albans Anglican Church in Wembley

Since 1909, the people in Wembley and Lake Saskatoon area have been very fortunate to have had an Anglican Church in which to worship. When the Reverend F. Moxhay became the first resident missionary in the area, he founded the Church of St. Andrew-by-the-Lake.

Finished in 1911, the church was the centre of mission work for the district until the railway was extended from Grande Prairie to Wembley in 1924.

The need arose for a new church when most of the Village of Lake Saskatoon moved to the town of Wembley, although St. Andrew's continued to serve the rural residents. St. Matthew's Church was dedicated in July 1925 with the services under the ministry of the Reverend R. Little of Grande Prairie. This church continued to serve the parish until 1946 when it was moved to Pipestone Creek.

Taking its place was a newer and larger church moved in from north of Sexsmith. Thus the church of St. Albans, Wembley, came into being.

Not much is known about the ministers who served the parish prior to 1932 when the Reverend R. Strachan was ordained in June of that year.

Reverend Eric Wright ministered to the Anglican congregation in Wembley, Lake Saskatoon, Pipestone Creek, Aspen Dale, and Huallen. He is fondly remembered by the many service boys from Wembley who served overseas. Eric Wright was their chaplain and friend during those terrible days in action. Several Wembley and Grande Prairie boys attached to the 49'ers were buried by him and it was a source of comfort for those bereaved. After three years of war service, he returned to Wembley to renew old acquaintances and once more served his parish and "boys". He will not be forgotten for his help and advice during the difficult time of adjustment to civilian life. He was in South Dakota when last heard from. One son Paul followed in his father's footsteps and is in a monastery in England. The other children are in the business world.

Reverend Glen Ash, a student, helped fill in when a regular minister was not available. It was not uncommon to see this young man on Sunday riding his bike from Wembley to Lake Saskatoon or Pipestone Creek to hold his services. The parish at that time could not afford transportation for this dedicated young man.

Then there was Dr. Pinkerton. How the children loved him. You could always find a group of them gathered around this benevolent old man at the organ. So



St. Alban's Anglican Church, Wembley.

sometimes the songs came out "Bringing in the Sheets" or "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord got a Nightie". They loved it and him. What beautiful memories they invoke.

Reverend Tom Wright and his wife and two daughters came to us after Dr. Pinkerton. Mrs. Wright, though a bedridden invalid, was a source of inspiration for all. She was an accomplished writer and poet and had many of her works published. They left a void when they moved to Canmore and later to Ganges, B.C. The church flourished during these periods. The following is one of Mrs. Wright's poems:

Peace River Country
by Grace A. Wright

I'd need to have an artist's hand
to paint a picture of this land.
So failing this, I have a yen
To write a picture with my pen.
But first I'll need to know the Peace,
Land of Beaver, moose and geese.
I know not its valleys, its hills,
Its mighty streams, running rills.

I've read of prairies - Prairies High
Prairies Salt, and Prairies Grande-
All belonging to this fair land.
I've heard of places, aptly named
For hidden graces, no less famed.
And some, no matter where they roam,
Will always think of these as home.

Beaverlodge, Rycroft, Overlea,
Deadwood, Driftpile, Hythe, Donnelly-
To write of these I cannot try.
For in all that vast assembly
The only place I know is Wembley-
Two long winters and one summer
It was home to this newcomer.



Confirmation 1963, St. Alban's Wembley.
Bishop Pierce, Rev. Allan Meaken, Dan Willsey, Gerald Willsey. Others unknown.

We had George Robertson with us for only a short time, but he had the fire to pack our small church to capacity.

Allen Bush and his lovely wife lived in Wembley for only a short period and then moved to Grande Prairie from whence he served St. Albans. Allen was called to a different vocation and is still an active politician.

Reverend Denis Corness was a highly intellectual man. He and his wife served us well but were soon called to a larger parish in B.C.

Stan Hills was a brilliant young clergyman who could give a sermon on anything. As he matured, he advanced and the last we heard of him, he was a Canon in Winnipeg.

Allan and Jean Meakin endeared themselves to the congregation in Wembley. When they moved to Grande Prairie in 1962, a new church, St. Augustine's, awaited them as Christ Church was too small for all the congregation. Allan served as rector at St. Augustine's and St. Albans for three years at which time it was decided to close St. Augustine's for economical reasons in 1968. The Meakins left for Ottawa to continue their ministry there.

St. Albans and St. Andrew's were without a resident minister. Since that time, the parish has been served by: Reverend J. Birchall-1968, Canon E.P. Williston-1969-1973, Reverend Lou Rivers-1973-April of 1979, all from Christ Church of Grande Prairie.

The small congregation of a few years ago has grown, family by family, even to the extent of electing a vestry in January of 1977. Services are held twice a month at two thirty in the afternoon with Sunday School held in the Masonic Lodge at the same time.

In January of 1978, the ladies of the Parish formed an Anglican Church Women's group which has been busy supporting the church and raising money to purchase an organ for services. The group also raised money to paint the inside and outside of the church in 1978.

The church has been busy over the past few years with baptisms, weddings, and a confirmation service. For three summers, it had the services of student ministers, and held Vacation Bible Schools in Wembley and Lake Saskatoon.

Improvements have been made over the past few years too. A new sidewalk was laid in 1977, a new altar, pulpit, font, prayer desk and chair were donated to St. Albans from the parish of St. Bartholomew's, Sarnia, Ontario in January of 1979. Mr. Bert Tieman of Grande Prairie also made a new lectern for St. Albans in 1979.

The summer of 1979 will see another change in the Parish of St. Albans with the arrival of Reverend Glen Burgomaster and family to Grande Prairie to minister to Christ Church and St. Albans of Wembley.

Wembley United Church

by Agnes Taylor

Speaking for Wembley, I have called on Mrs. Edgar, who has, over the years since coming to their homestead at Scenic Heights in 1918, been connected with church work.

At that time Reverend C. Hopkins was the minister. He had just completed building a church on an acre of land donated by Mr. Norman Edgar, which was also used as a school in the Scenic Heights district. Only a few services had been held there when a mysterious fire burned it. Then services were held in two different homestead shacks. Mr. Hopkins, a widower, and his mother lived on



The Wembley United Church congregation, about 1928.
Rev. Simmons was the minister. Some of those present were: Alice Smith, Jean Purves, Agnes Smith, John Archer, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Watson, Margaret Archer, Mr. and Mrs. Rutledge, Helen Wilson, Ida MacDougall, Curtis Neilson, George Wilson, Edna Stokke, Jean Wilson, Agnes Watson, Margaret and Dorothy Moore, Bobby Simmons, Mrs. Simmons.

his farm near Lake Saskatoon. He had also built a church at Lake Saskatoon, which over the years was moved several times, first in 1930 to the road out of the Old Town, again to Cut Bank Lake on the John Alstad farm and to Wembley in 1956, where it is joined to the church, which was brought here in 1926. It is now a Sunday School room, a place for meetings, and small wedding banquets.

Many of you will know Lake Saskatoon practically moved to Wembley when the railroad came.

The Reverend Finlay, United Church minister at Lake Saskatoon up to 1926, and Mr. Archer, father of John Archer of Beaverlodge, were influential in purchasing two buildings at Lake Saskatoon and having them moved into Wembley, the church and also the manse, which was a Government Telegraph operator's house and office.

Our first charge minister, in Wembley, Reverend Robert Simons, served Lower Beaverlodge and what was then Spring Creek, now the Dimsdale Community one Sunday, Cut Bank Lake and Hermit Lake the next, with services in Wembley each Sunday night.

Then came Reverend Carr, coming from Ontario, they brought a carload of furniture. It took some settling to decide who was going to pay the bill. They had two sons who went into the ministry, Reverend Arthur and Reverend Douglas, who at the time of their father's sudden passing, then preaching at Steveston, B.C., were both called to go there and preach. Doug, as he was known, then at Beaverlodge, resigned and went. Mr. Carr who became Dr. Carr, also served as President of Conference. He was very interested in the young people.

Then Reverend Houston was next. He was at Wembley during the hard 1930's. He was a very conscientious man. The Houstons, now retired, live at Camrose. Their youngest daughter Helen is now and for some years past Dr. Helen Houston, a medical missionary, serving in Nepal. While home on furlough, we were glad to see her and hear of her work.

Next was Reverend Newman Truax, a relative of Mr. Al Truax of Beaverlodge. His home town was Walkerton, Ontario not far from Mrs. Edgar's home. Mr. Truax was here five years. While here, Mrs. Truax was ill quite a lot. They were both fine musicians. He is now at Wellington, Ontario. While Mrs. Edgar was visiting her nephew in Kingston, she phoned them and nothing would do but she must come and visit them. Mr. Truax came in and picked her up. She spent a day and night there. They have a great big, old-style church, and house. Letters say a lot of renovation has been done to the church.



Rev. and Mrs. Truax, with Muriel.



Wembley Ladies Aid, July 1927 at Grannie Watson's.
Back row: Mrs. Paul, Mrs. Archer.
Next row: Mrs. McLean, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Carlisle, Mrs. Edgar.
Front row: Kathleen Keyes, Grannie Watson, Simon's baby, Edna Keyes, Agnes Watson.

Reverend Clougston came to Wembley next, the same year Reverend Jackson came to Beaverlodge. During his years spent in Wembley, our church became self-supporting for a few months. At one time we were glad to have a reserve of the big sum of $109; later that gradually disappeared. Mr. Clougston married an Anglican girl, and finally turned Anglican. Last heard of they were both serving on a mission field in China.

Reverend Whaley came in 1944 or 1945, was a curler and a very popular man at Lake Saskatoon, so we hear. Word is he passed on just recently in Edmonton.

Next we had a Lay Supply. Mr. Milton Swaren was here only a short time 1947-1948. He continued in the work of the United Church, as seen by a United Church Observer write-up by Reverend M. Swaren.

The Reverend Art Boorman was our next minister. He was here for two years. He left by permission from the man who was influential in his going into, and through training for, the ministry. He went to Union College, New York for further studies. He later became Dr. Boorman and was professor at McGill University. The last word I had of him he had considerable trouble hearing; Mrs. Boorman said progressive deafness. He was doing counselling and loved his garden. Now I hear he is President of Theological College, Quebec. Mrs. Boorman took all the studies for a minister, had completed all but being ordained. Art felt she had a full time job being a minister's wife.



Left to right: Our United Church Choir group at the Stokke's.
Seated: Agnes Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Kronendonk.
Standing: Mrs. Bunyan, Betty Kuntz, Mary McKenzie, Myrt Stokke, Kate Penney and Kate Watson.

Next minister we had was Reverend Roy Chubb. He served Hythe also, but resided in Wembley. The Chubb family were fine singers. A brother, Reverend Frank, was at that time in Dawson Creek. The Chubbs were here about two years. Mr. Chubb is not in the ministry now, but with the Government, doing counselling and helping in other ministerial duties. Mrs. Chubb, a nurse, took an interest in Explorers, not taking on Sunday School work as her family was yet small. Mr. Chubb was very interested in the Wells organization while at Wembley, though he pushed it strongly, it did not take here. During Mr. Chubb's time here he was pressed to try to enlarge the charge. He held services across the Wapiti, south of Wembley with not too bad a turn out at first. Quite a change took place there when the land changed hands.



Wembley United Church.



Ladies Aid at Mrs. Young's, 1942.
Back row: Left to Right: Mona Smith, Mrs. McLean, Mrs. Bissett, ? ?, Molly Farquhar, Kathleen Cameron, Tilly Rickerby, Gertie Austin, Gertie Alstad and Bob, Evelyn Sebastian and Garry, Mrs. Konshak.
Kneeling: Mrs. Perdue, Mrs. Edgar, Mrs. Milton White, Grannie Watson, Olive Thompson, Mrs. Coe, Tilly Alstad, Mrs. Neilson, Sheila Perdue, ? ?, Mrs. Jean Bunyan, Mrs. Young, Ida Rollin, Elizabeth Cameron, Mrs. Albert Smith, Louella Cameron, Pat Smith, Ethel Cameron and Joan Young.

Mr. William Kranendonk came next, continued holding services over there. When the South Wapiti school closed, there was just no attendance, so that was dropped. Mr. Kranendonk was a very fine man, a Lay Supply who will always be remembered here, very interested in his work, just never could do enough to help in every effort put on. His wife served as organist while here. He came here from Oostburg, Wisconsin. He had one son, Reverend Paul, a minister in the faith and a son-in-law, Reverend Zenke, who served at Hythe at the same time. Mrs. Edgar was delegate to Conference the year Mr. Kranendonk was elected from the floor as delegate to General Council. Quite an honor and he was very pleased. His family came from Holland when he was twelve years old. Having served over ten years in Alberta, he then retired and went back to their former home, the same house on the farm at Oostburg, Wisconsin.

We then had a Lay Supply, Mr. Larry Lees, who spent about a year and two months here. Leaving here he fully planned going on for the ministry, he said he was well aware of the years of preparation ahead of him. We hear he is teaching school. He was a very clever young man.

Next was Mr. Robert Windrum, then minister at Sexsmith. He was not here very long either, about a year and a half. Mr. Windrum did not continue in the work of the church.

Mr. James Nicholas was our next minister. He and his wife lived in Hythe with service at Wembley each Sunday morning. His wife always accompanied him to Wembley. Cannot say how many years he served the double charge. Mr. Nicholas was at Redwater when he resigned. He came back to Barrhead where he bought a house. His former home was about ten miles out of the town. He still serves two small places every second Sunday. Mr. Nicholas enjoyed visiting and folks were all pleased to see him.

We next had Reverend Mark Bedford. He lived in the manse at Hythe. Mr. Bedford was a good powerful singer, really good at talking to the Sunday School before they left for their classes in the Sunday School room. When leaving here he went to Fort St. John. While there a new United and Anglican Church was built. Leaving there, we understand, he went to Calgary as an assistant minister in one of the churches working with the young people's groups.

Reverend Barry Thomas came next. He also spent two years. Services in Wembley were each Sunday morning. Mr. Thomas received a call to Talbotville, Ontario, a place about four miles out of St. Thomas. He also served two or three other small places. Have no word as to where he is now.

Then came Mr. George Rumbolt, Lay Supply, also here two years. Mr. Rumbolt, not a young man, retired, now lives at Ponoka, where he purchased a home. He serves one point about 17 miles out each week. He was quite a powerful singer.

We then had Reverend Miss Gwen Symington for only one year. We liked her very much and were very sorry to see her leaving. In order that the people from the Pioneer Home at Hythe could take in the services, we had to change our time from ten to eleven o'clock. At first we did not like the change, but soon got used to it. Miss Symington planned on going back to the farm she and a friend, Freda, had at Mayerthorpe.

Since 1972, we have had the Reverend Clinton Swallow and family from 1972 to 1974. In 1974, Reverend Swallow was retiring from the ministry and taking over his father's farm. He and his wife were going to build a children's home. This would have proven a tremendous success, as Reverend Swallow was so good with children, but sorry to say, just a day or two before leaving, he and his wife were both killed in a car accident, leaving four daughters and one son.

Reverend Tom Harding and family came on August 1, 1974 remaining until the end of March 1980. He is retiring and going farming in B.C.

I would like to mention a few items of interest. I don't know how we would ever have got along over the many years, without Mr. and Mrs. V.C. Flint who helped us here, both financially and also did such a lot of work painting. They did almost all the work fixing up the Sunday School room, just doing necessary odd jobs. He was the Secretary of the official board for many years. Mrs. Jean Bunyan, also a great help as Sunday School superintendent, organist, in the choir, also conducted the choir at times, and President of the United Church Women. We have on our church a carillon, a gift of the Bunyan family in memory of Mr. Bunyan with V.C. Flint supplying the cabinet gramophone.

Mrs. Bunyan, Mr. V.C. Flint, Mr. F.R. Van Schaick and Mrs. Watson Sr. were session members for many years. Mr. and Mrs. Van Schaick, were a real help while here, Mr. Van Schaick having had quite a lot of religious training, and Mrs. Van Schaick so capable, they took many a service, filling-in in time of need. Mr. Van Schaick also served as secretary of this local point for five years, 1940-1945 and continued to serve on the Board of Stewards.

Mrs. Robert McLean was a great help, took a keen interest in all the work of the church. She and Mrs. Farquhar were builders of the W.M.S., and she kept the group alive for quite a time, when the W.M.S. and the Ladies Aid became one. Mrs. McLean, a Sunday School teacher, looked after the cradle roll. Mrs. Farquhar was secretary of the Ladies Aid for quite a time.

Mrs. Castleman's name appears signing the Constitution of the Ladies Aid, formed in 1926. It later became known as the Women's Organization, now the United Church Women. We had several different presidents of this group, at one time had 18 to 21 members. We have not had too many secretary-treasurers. Mrs. Edgar served for years, Mrs. Farquhar with Mrs. Tom Watson, Mrs. Keown, Mrs. P. Gill for short periods, again Mrs. Edgar and now Mrs. M. Anderson. Have had different organists over the years, Mrs. Simons, Mrs. Edgar, Mrs. Bunyan, Mrs. R. Stokke, Mr. Geddes, Mrs. Kranendonk, and Mr. Rigby. Also new members on the session for a short time were; Mrs. E. Andersen, C. R. White, Mr. and Mrs. H. Rehaume, Mrs. R. Compagnon, Mrs. P. Taylor when all the groups became one, known as the Church Board.

Sunday School Superintendents over the years were; Mr. J. A. Archer, Mrs. Bunyan, Mrs. Rehaume, and Mrs. M. Anderson.

Canadian Girls in Training leaders were; Mrs. Edgar and Mrs. A. M. Carlisle, and Olive Kowensky for a short period.

Explorers leaders were; Mrs. K. Watson, Mrs. Mary McKenzie, Mrs. M. Stokke, Mrs. Chubb, and Mrs. Anderson.

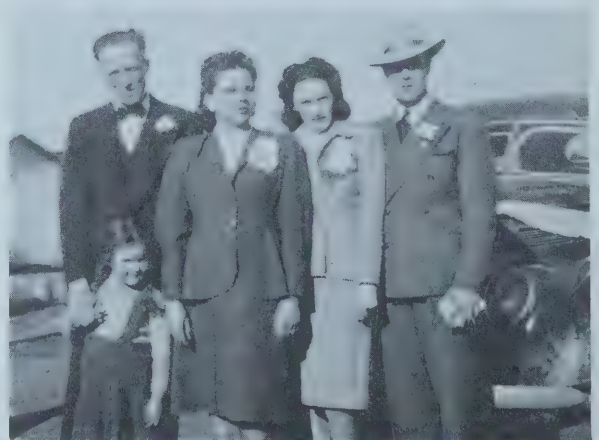
Mrs. Eric Andersen, being artistically gifted, has decorated our church each Thanksgiving Sunday over the past numbr of years.

Mrs. Len Konshak, at the time of her death, left her piano to our Sunday School. Our organ was purchased from Mrs. Nordstrom in the early 1920's. Mr. and Mrs. Nordstrom came to the district from the United States in the spring of 1921 bringing the organ with them.

Though sharing ministers the three United Church charges of Wembley, Beaverlodge and Hythe each have their own officers, and their own annual meeting, all coming together early in the new year to make out the new budget, which used to take most of an afternoon. Money was always quite a question. Mrs. Edgar has been our secretary-treasurer for many years, so knows about all we need to know. We appreciate her help preparing this story. We now have a lovely church, well equipped throughout.

South Wapiti Lumber Company Story

In the fall of 1946, the Anderson brothers of Albright, Alberta (Albert, George, and Henry) purchased the South Wapiti Lumber Company from Jack Radford. The business, located on the eastern boundary of Wembley, was home base for the sawmills operating in the South Wapiti timber berth. It was soon to become the site of much building activity, with a new planer, a large implement garage, and residence for Albert, being added to the existing buildings.



Albert and Agnes Anderson's wedding day, with Albert, Agnes, Margaret and Henry Anderson and niece Gale.



South Wapiti truck at the camp across the river.

Within two years a new timber berth was purchased 30 miles south and east of Wembley and plans were underway to build a new road into the area. The fall of 1949 saw the road completed, a well drilled, and a complete new sawmill and camp built ready for winter operations. With sawyer Stan Eckstrom, and truckers Elmer Ford, Albert Parry, Ken Montgomery, Werner Marth and many others, the heavy loads of rough sawn lumber were soon negotiating the tricky Wapiti hills and rolling into Wembley. Here the lumber was piled, to dry until summer planing operations saw it loaded into railway boxcars and shipped to points in Canada and the United States.

Sawing operations were over in the spring of 1955, but the Albert and George Andersons were to live on in Wembley until the summer of 1966. Then, after selling the business in Houston B.C., the Albert Anderson family moved to Beaverlodge and George and family moved to Grande Prairie. Henry, living with his family on the old business site, passed away January, 1978. George died in late December of the same year.

The Andersons have had many happy memories of the people who were very much a part of their sawmill and planing operations, many of whom have now passed away. One can never underestimate the important role of the "cookhouse staff" in any camp. Annie and Elmer Dahl with their helpers, cheerfully provided excellent, bountiful meals in clean surroundings, the nucleus of social life at the mill.

Of the four Albert Anderson children, only Verl remains in the district. A graduate of Beaverlodge high school, he lives in Grande Prairie and is employed as boilerman for Proctor and Gamble. Joan and husband Bruce Ritchie live in St. Albert and are employees of Alberta Government Telephones. Terry, together with his wife Elaine (Saville) and two small daughters, Angela and Terry Lynn, live at Vegreville where Terry is a school teacher. He is also taking post-graduate courses at University of Alberta. Neil, with wife Beverley (Douglas) and daughter Tracy lives in Calgary. Neil and Beverley are both graduates of Mount Royal College, in Environmental Quality Control. Neil's work as field operations manager for Colfax Surveys takes him to many different countries.

Wembley Curling Club

by Don Watson

A meeting of enthusiastic citizens of Wembley was held in the office of R.J. Rutledge in the fall of 1927. The purpose of this meeting was to make plans for the building of a curling rink, and the formation of Wembley's first curling club.

It was decided by nomination that R. Kranz serve as chairman, and H.T. Lamont serve as secretary for this meeting. A permanent executive was formed at this meeting, consisting of the following people: Hugh Allen, Honorable President; Tom Dancey, president; A.G. Little, vice-president; H.T. Lamont, secretary-treasurer; R. Kranz, J. Kingsbuty, and R.J. Rutledge, the committee, and Reverend R. Simons, chaplain.

The following year on December 21, 1928, a meeting was held in the new two sheet curling rink in Block two. The membership fees were set at $15 per year for men payable in advance and ladies fees would be $5 per year to curl two afternoons per week plus one evening on a single sheet per week. The following skips were elected by ballot; C.F. Hopkins, James McFarlane, Jacob Miller, Tom Dancey, H.T. Lamont, R.J. Rutledge, J.C. Ward, William Feist, Dr. Carlisle, E.E. Buchanan, A. MacGregor, B.D. Johnston and James Fletcher. In January 1929, the club decided to have a bonspiel to start February 18, a fee of $2 per person for non-members was to be charged. The executive was empowered to purchase prizes up to a value of $10. The rules of the Alberta Curling Association were to be strictly followed during the bonspiel. The young club was moving ahead and flourishing.

On October 28, 1929 the annual meeting of the curling club was held in the Wembley hall. The new executive was formed and fees were set at $15 for town, and $12 for farmers. John Wagar was appointed caretaker at a monthly wage of $40.

In 1931 the fees were reduced to $7 for village curlers, $5 for country curlers, and $3 for ladies. That same year William Palmer was appointed caretaker for both the curling rink and skating rink, the fee to be $100 per month. In 1932 the caretaking was divided, James Rickerby was responsible for the curling rink for $75 for the season, and H.C. Burmeister the skating rink at $85 per season. During 1937 it was decided to add an extension to the curling rink, to accomodate the growing club.

The 1940's saw more happenings in the club. Ben Austin was made an honorary member in 1946, and in 1947 the purchase of a building at Ft. St. John for $500 was approved, with voluntary members signing separate notes for the amount. In October 1948 Olson Transport was given the contract to haul the building from Ft. St. John. Five men were paid 80¢ per hour plus board to take it apart. The 40 foot by 165 foot building was rebuilt on the site of the old rink in 1949 and provided three sheets of ice.

In 1954 the rink was covered with aluminum roofing, which would stop some of the leaking onto the ice surface. In 1957 water and sewer lines were connected to the building, which was a welcome addition. The late 1950's was the start of the Ron Bisgrove pig bonspiel, which would be an annual event. In 1960 the Dimsdale Recreational Society started using the rink one night a week as a community get together.

In 1967 the biggest improvement to date was undertaken when the artificial ice plant was installed as a Centennial project. The total cost of the plant installation was $15,000, but the number of rinks participating the first year jumped from 12 to 22, which made it all worthwhile. In 1968-1969, Wallace Edgar and Bill Watson

were given honorary memberships to the club. Mr. Watson also served as caretaker during these years.

In the early 1970's an Agricultural Society was formed for the sole purpose of obtaining grants, organizing fund raising events, volunteer labour groups etc. to build a new recplex for this area. The building would house a four sheet curling rink, plus a covered arena for hockey, broomball and public skating. In late 1974 the dividends of a lot of effort by many people became a reality when curling started in the spanking new building. The curling club had come a long way since its beginning in 1927.

This is a brief outline of some of the developments of the Wembley Curling Club over the years. A club such as this can only achieve success through the efforts and dedication of many people, who give unselfishly of their time for the betterment of the community. Some are able and willing to give more than others and it is a tribute to those people, the ones who have passed on and the ones remaining who will carry the load in the years ahead. The whole area owes them a big thank-you. The results of their efforts are portrayed in the success of this club. May it carry on for years to come.

Wembley School

When the settlers in the area south and west of Saskatoon Lake village petitioned the government for a school to serve the needs of their children, the new school district of Hillhead was established in 1917. The original log school was situated on the south-east corner of the Myrham Stewart homestead, land presently owned by the Bruno Kaut family.

The chairman of the new Hillhead School Board was John Watson and the new school derived its name from the district the Watsons had emigrated from in Ireland. Miss Margaret McNaught of Appleton was the first teacher. Her students recall her riding horseback to her home each weekend.

Shortly after the school began operating it was decided that a more suitable building was required. A new one-room building was constructed about a half-mile east on land now owned by Otto and Agnes Kirscht. As well as regular classes, Sunday school and church services were also held in the school. Many students of the Hillhead school recall the good times enjoyed at school picnics. These year-end picnics became an important community event where both children and adults participated in different sports and contests.

A few of the families who lived in the area and whose children attended Hillhead school were Connollys, Mills, Watsons, Gardener, Wilson, Purves', Boyd, Roberts, Smiths, Ross, Mates, Brooks, Stokkes, MacDougalls.

One teacher, Mr. Fred Barber, is remembered having walked daily to and from his land two miles to teach at this Hillhead school. Some other teachers who taught here were Miss Isobel McNaught (Perry), Miss Mona Foy, and Capt. R.E. Campbell.

With the arrival of the railway to the area in 1924, the new village of Wembley was established. At first, there was no school in the village so during 1924-25 Mr. Mates drove a horse-drawn van to carry students out to Hillhead School. During cold weather he installed a small heater for the comfort of his passengers.

To meet the needs of the expanding village, in 1925, Hillhead school was moved into Wembley village. During 1925-1926, the increased enrollment made it necessary to construct a second room. This two-room school was situated in the northwest portion of the present school yard. As the number of students continued to grow it was necessary for the next few years to locate one class in the Masonic Lodge hall and one in the United Church building.

In addition to village students, many children either walked or rode horses from the rural portion of the Wembley school district. Some students were vanned to Wembley. During the year 1928-29 a horsedrawn van driven by Donald MacNeill and later Dan Paul and son Alex transported children from the area southwest of Wembley. Some of the families served by this van included the Whytes, Farquhars, Taylors, Thomsons, Kirschts, MacNeills.

A growing need to locate all students in one building was solved by the local school board's decision to construct a new four room school. This was to consist of two upstairs classrooms and two basement classrooms. The contractor who was in charge of construction was a Mr. Babiuk and two of the local men who were employed by him were Jack Thomson and Russell Knight.



First High School Class in new school, 1930.
Back: Melvin Fowler (principal).
Next row: (L-R) Wellington Riggs, Andrew Thomson, Hector Paul, Armine Kastner, ? ?, Arthur Carr, Dick Smith, Dick Roberts.
Front row: Irene Carr, Agnes Smith, Edna Stokke, Pearl Boyd, Margaret Archer, Erna Stokke, Doreen Feist, Alice Smith, Mary Beatty, Betty Riggs.
Seated: Curtis Neilson.

The new school was completed during 1930, allowing grades six to 12 to be housed in the two upstairs rooms. The old two roomed school continued to be used for grades one to five until the fall of 1938, at which time one of the basement rooms in the new school was utilized as a classroom. Later, when no longer required, the old school was sold. Mr. Robert Kranz purchased one portion to use as a flour shed adjacent to his general store. The other section was made into a home by Mr. Senner and was later moved to Grande Prairie.

The front of the school grounds was planted with hedges, lawns and flowers and there was a large playground area on the east side of the school property. A barn was provided for students who used horses to get to school.

Many teachers taught in these schools in Wembley. Former students recall Mr. Mel Fowler, Miss Helen Bromley (later Mrs. Fowler), Miss Ruth Robertson (Stokke), and Miss Mary Robertson. In October 1934, Inspector H.E. Balfour announced that Mr. and Mrs. Whenham would be teaching manual training and household science programs at Wembley School during 1934-1935. In the spring of 1935 the Herald Tribune reported that the display of students work resulting from this program had been favorably received by the public.



Construction of school, 1954.

Other teachers well remembered by their students include Mr. McClung, Miss Kitlitz, Mr. Davidson, Mr. Sagert, Miss Louella Phillips. Miss Doreen Feist, Miss Rhoda Patterson. Mrs. Storm was principal for two different periods. Mr. William Rigby, Miss J. Ballantyne (Johnson), Mr. Murray Wenstob and Mrs. John Bunyan also taught for some time. Mrs. R.A. Bunyan was substitute teacher for many years.



Wembley School.

Students were actively involved in many different kinds of events. Wembley students recall participating in trackmeets in Grande Prairie, Saskatoon Lake and Beaverlodge. Dick Roberts is one student frequently remembered for his outstanding athletic skills and successes at the district trackmeet. A tennis club and active basketball teams competed with other highschool teams in the area. A few girls who played on the basketball team include Margaret Archer, Erna and Edna Stokke, Doreen Feist, Eva Duncan, Alice and Agnes Smith, Jean Purves, Nell and Mary Beatty and Betty Riggs.

In addition to sporting events, a number of students were involved in the musical festivals which were held in



Wembley School, 1926 to 1938.



Wembley High School.
Back row: Eric Stamp, Margaret Kopp, Gus Stamp, Audrey Nickel, Willard Nickel, Vera Feist, Don Perdue.
Middle row: Donnie Cameron, Violet Squires, Betty Lang, Ethel Cameron, May Ryan, Fred Perdue.
Front row: Allen Jensen, Donna Penney, Donald Watson, Anne Smith, Muriel Sutherland, Cecil Brooks, teacher, Mrs. E.A.M. Storm.

Grande Prairie. Solo, duet, choir, and piano classes were entered. It is reported in the Grande Prairie paper October 27, 1932, that the high school debating club sponsored four teams who considered the topic Co-education vs. Segregated Education. An annual Christmas concert which involved the entire student body was held in the town hall. A school newspaper "High-School Chronicle" was published during 1933-1934 with Erna Stokke as editor and Doreen Feist as sub-editor.

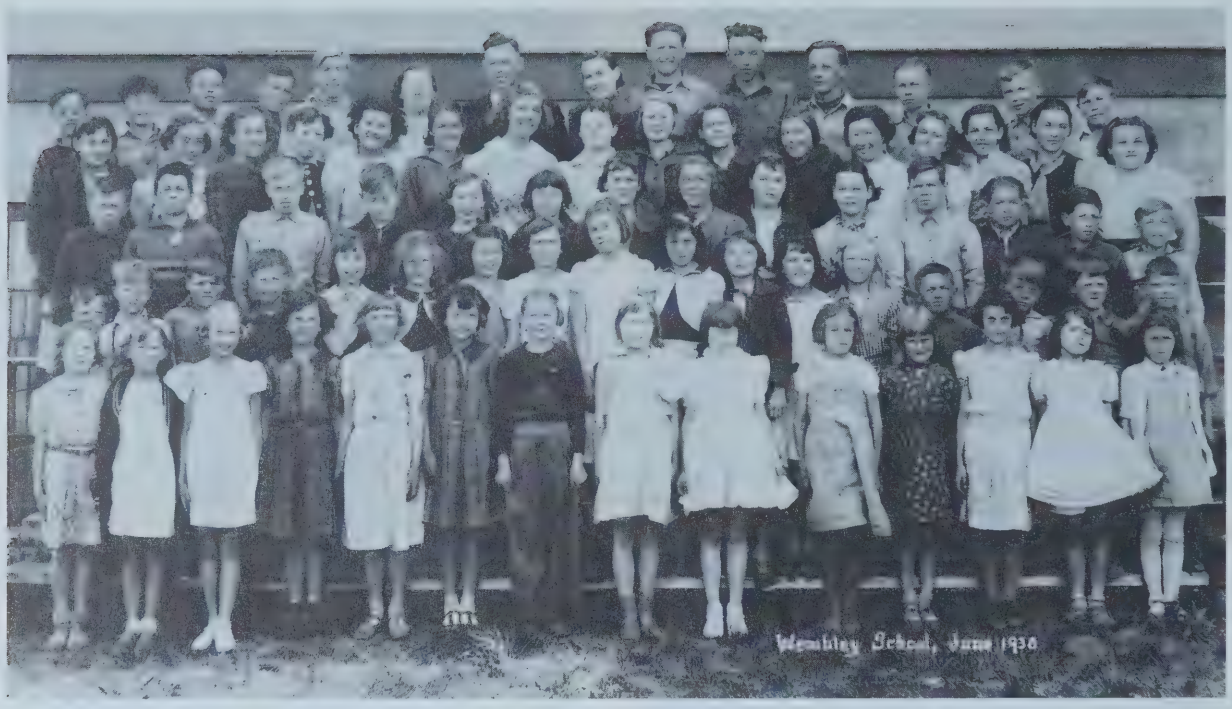
One of the important jobs in operating a school is that of the janitor. Some of the men who kept the school warm, cleaned and repaired were Mr. Ben Austin, Mr. John Squires, Mr. Len Konshak, Mr. J.K. Campbell, and Bryce Campbell.

In 1949, a Home and School Association was started. Conveners A.W. Mitchell, Mrs. R.A. Bunyan and Mrs. W. Feist organized the first meeting at which president A. Ruark, Vice President Reverend A. Boorman and secretary Mrs. C. Johnson were elected. For many years this group assisted with library operation with funds to send students to science and social studies conferences, and in liaison between the school and community.

During 1954, contractor John Brandsatar of Hythe was hired to build a new school to consist of six classrooms, gymnasium, science lab, typing room and principal's office. There was also to be a full basement with playrooms, storage and washrooms. In December 1954, 40 grade nine to twelve students moved to the new school. During March of 1955 the last students of the four room school were moved into this new building. Mr. Glen Lett principal. Miss Rita Bode, Mrs. Alice Scorgie, Mrs. Lillian Lowe, Miss Eileen Bannister and Mrs. Grace Cook were the first teachers in this new school.

The students union during 1955 sponsored fund raising projects to assist with the purchase of sports equipment and chairs for the gym. Their executive included Connie Miller, Erika Anderson, Pat Smith, Karen Anderson, Erwin Noyes, Harry Patrick and Ken Hennig. Mrs. Scorgie recalls the teachers assisting with painting the gym floor in an effort to complete the project.

As it became increasingly more difficult to operate a school in a small district, Wembley and Saskatoon Lake consolidated their operations for several years. During 1956-1957 discussions were held to pave the way towards inclusion in the newly formed county system.



Top 5th row: Jack Rupp, Kay Trelle, Frank Squires, Doug Johnson, Reg Beatty, Doreen Feist, Mr. Davidson, Alma Ketlitz, Harry Johnson, Bob Kennedy, Stan Dobbyn, Art Pitchko, John Bunyan, Lloyd Finch.
4th row: Beryl Purves, Irene Bradley, Marie Trelle, Ruby Pearson, Enid Dzaman, Isabelle McNeill, Nell Beatty, Magdalene Pitchko, Blanche Pitchko, Edith Stewart, Jean Beatty, Kathy Ross, Roberta Watson, Helen Purves, Marj Feist, Jean Dool.
3rd row: Murray Boyd, Bill Dzaman, Jack Roberts, Tom Bunyan, Marian Bunyan, Dorcas Johnson, Joyce Feist, Julia Kasprow, Marg Russel, Alice Dool, Bob Thomson, Ben Miller, Geo Stewart, Lyle Moss.
2nd row: Angus Thomson, Wilfred Rupp, Martin Thomson, Bob Stewart, Marg Dupont, Georgina Farquhar, Kathy Farquhar, Mabel Pitchko, Edna McFadden, Jessie Farquhar, Pearl Johnson, Audrey Purves, Mary Kasprow, Johnny Kasprow, Ken Dzaman, Bob Cook, Harry Squires.
1st row: Elberta McFadden, Maxine Kussow, Betty Watson, Eileen Dzaman, Jessie Kasprow, Doreen Dzaman, Jean Smith, Hazel Penney, Jean Boyd, Sonja Stamp, Ileen Jensen, Mabel Bradley, Pat McFadden, Betty Farquhar.



Grade 7, 8, & 9; Wembley School (1950-51).
Back row: Donnie McRae, Billy Farquhar, Edgar Sexton, Gilbert Thompson, Rodger Edgar, Murray Wenstob (teacher).
Middle row: Doreen Pack, Connie Miller, Pat Smith, Violet Nickel, Sheila Perdue, Mary Penney, Marjorie Clark, Merna Ford, Marlene Jensen, Karen Andersen, Barbara Clark, Joan Miller.
Front row: Eddie Cowpar, Lawrence Penney, Ray Stokke, Jimmy Anderson, Jerry McNeill, Donald Thomson, Bobby Thomson, Stanley Nickel, Cliff Wollum.



Some of the pupils recognized from the Wembley school. Standing in front of the first type of school bus (horse drawn) in 1929 are Myrtle and Lawrence Osborne, Pearl Boyd, Dorothy and Martha Miller, John Archer, Herb and Bill Robertson, Eva and George Clayton, Curtis Neilson.

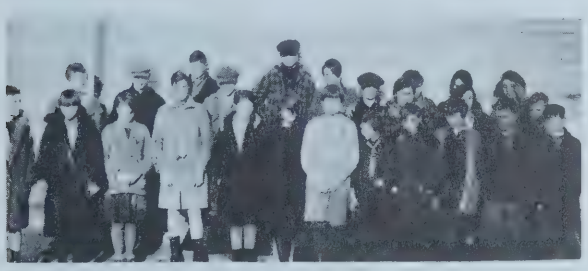
When admission to the county system took place during 1957-1958 the first students to be bussed to Wembley included those from Pipestone Creek, Aspen Ridge, part of Hermit Lake and part of Klondike Trail. Later Aspendale and Saint John's students were bussed in. As the students population increased more classrooms were required. In 1959 four additional classrooms were completed and in 1963 a further four rooms and a science lab were required. The population stabilized and until the recent influx of families occurred no increase in size was required. During 1980 a new building program will be undertaken to accomodate a rapidly growing student body.

At the present time Wembley school serves the grade one to nine students of the community. The 1967 graduating class was the last grade 12 class in Wembley. In subsequent years grades 10-11-12 were bussed to Beaverlodge Regional High School.

The principals who have directed activities in the present school include Mr. Glen Lett, Mr. Ron Greenslade, Mrs. Mary Pandachuck, Mr. Stewart Little, Mr. Peter Gill, Mr. Ken Fulton, Mr. Peter Thompson and Mr. Ron Dahl.



Grades 1, 2, & 3, 1954-55.
Front row: Dorothy Kirscht, Laverne Gustavson, Vivian Sask, Ronnie McNeil, Mavis Sterling, Elaine Miller, Wilma Murphy, Linda Ganz, ? Thomson.
Next row: Linda Smashnuk, Cora Cooper, Gary Young, David Boyd, Donna Boyd, Terry Rehaume.
Next row: Dennis Ganz, Kit Paul, Judy Harder, Jerry Willsey, Dean Barley, Kenny Sask.
Back row: Jeanette Gustavson, Carol Murphy, Urte Andersen, Dorothea Fitzimmons, Roy Sebastian, Gloria Cranston, Rosemarie Spurgeon, Cheryl Domstad, Gordon Stevens.
Teacher Alice Scorgie.



Pupils of Hillhead School, late 1920's.
(L-R) Front row: Doreen Feist, Edna Stokke, Esther Fisher, Millie Begon, Helen Wilson, Valera Johnson, Jean Johns, Helen Hedges, Cora Johnson, Margaret Farquhar.
Back row: Margaret McNaught, Wilber Richard, Walter Kirkland, Ross Dancey, George Fisher, Alma Coleman, Reg Ireland, Inez Gillespie, Audrey Kirkland, Emily Fisher, Ida McDougal, Agnes Smith, Curtis Neilson.

School Days

by Doreen (Feist) Riggs

The year we moved to Wembley, in July, 1927, I was going into grade eight. When I saw the school I just couldn't imagine how all the children in town could be taught in two rooms. I had attended a 12 roomed school at Nanton where each room had a single grade to a class.

When September arrived and school commenced, our class, taught by Margaret McNaught, was crowded with students in grades seven, eight, nine, and ten. Some of us sat in double desks with tops that had to be raised if you wanted books or pencils from the storage place. You can imagine the difficulty when you were using pen and ink and your seating partner wanted something from within.

Another surprise for me at the school was the school barn where the students, who rode to school from the surrounding farms, put their horses. The boys and girls used to go out at lunch time to feed and water the animals. The water was obtained from a schoolyard well by means of a hand pump.

One of the reasons our classroom was so crowded was because of the huge stove at the centre back of the room. Around the stove was a heavy metal five foot protection wall to keep us away from the stove. The wall had a big door that allowed the caretaker access to the stove. The hinges on that door gave forth their screeching song every time it was opened. Our coats were hung at the back of the room.

Oh! how I remember the first cold snowy day, everyone arrived wearing new moccasins and the aroma of smoked hide lingered in the classroom for the rest of the winter.

I soon found that friendliness and loyalty at that school was far more personal than anything I had experienced at my previous school.

I believe it was the next year that the influx of railway men and their families put a heavy strain on our two roomed school and we had to expand. Those in high school attended school for a time in the Masonic Hall with Mr. Humphrey as teacher. Some of the lower grades were placed in the United Church. That year we watched the progress of the building of the new school on the grounds to the south of the old two roomer. It was a four-roomed story-and-a-half building with indoor washrooms and a good sized foyer in the upper section. Only two rooms were used as classrooms with the old school kept in use also.

The official opening was a gala affair. There was card playing and dancing after the opening ceremonies. That was my first public dance and Mom had made me a georgette dress especially for the event.

Mr. Mel Fowler and Mrs. A.E.M. Storm were my high school teachers for the remainder of my years at Wembley school. Our science lab was contained in one cabinet about the size of a kitchen cupboard. The final exams were set by the Department of Education in Edmonton. They were three hours long and we weren't allowed to leave the rooms until they were handed in. The papers were sent to Edmonton to be marked, then we waited until the marks were returned - usually about the end of July.

The year of 1937, I graduated from Edmonton Normal School and returned to Wembley to teach as a primary teacher having grades one to five inclusive. Where was my classroom? Why, in the classroom where I had begun my school days in Wembley. I had forgotten how cold that floor could be in winter, so, I joined the children and donned moccasins on the coldest days. The old stove was still there with its squeaky door.

The following year my class was moved to the big school which now used three of the rooms as teaching areas. I taught for two more years before leaving the profession to be married. (It is expected you would give up teaching, a lady only taught if she were a spinster or a widow.)

Looking back, the friendships that I made at that old school have been the golden friendships I have continued to have through the many years since.

Wembley 4-H Beef Club

The organization which was the forerunner of 4-H as we know it today started in the Wembley Area in the early 1930's. Known as the Junior Farmer's Beef Club, it was led by the District Agriculturist, Mr. W.J. Thompson. He also soon started a Swine Club, which had only one meeting every year, and that was combined with their

achievement day. The main purpose of these organizations would seem to be the improvement of livestock and grain in the area, as shown by the way the Swine Club was run. At the start of the club year, each member was given two barrows and one sow; the purpose was to fatten the barrows and sell them at the achievement day, with part of the proceeds going back to the government to pay for the sow. In this manner, better stock was gradually introduced into the region.

4-H started about 1935, and in addition to Beef and Swine, there also were Grain and Dairy Clubs in the Wembley area. The Beef achievement day always was quite an occasion before everyone had a truck to haul their steer. On several years, the achievement day was held at Alec Craig's farm, and he donated a purebred Shorthorn heifer to the winner for about three years. An impressive sight at these days was Tom Sheehan's outfit from Clairmont; he had a green wagon with a big Hereford painted on the side, and they made quite a show as they arrived, pulled by a snappy team!

Familiar names in the early days of the Swine Club were Merv Jaque, Frank Stoll, Grimsruds, Alec Ross, Bob Mulligan, and Don Grant, while former Grain Club members and leaders were Bill Feist, Len Haglund, Danny Rycroft, Frank Stoll, Justin Rigby, Al Truax, Ken Edgerton, Stokkes, Hodgson's, Bud and Joan Stoll, Hennebergs, Rigbys and Sebastians, among many others.

Interest in the Beef Club waned for several years until 1964 when the club was revived with a flourish. The 1965-66 year saw about 40 members competing! Public Speaking competitions must have been a real marathon then. Leaders during the 1964-69 period were Sig Hennig, Frank Stoll, Joan MacAlister, and Arnold Dryer. During that time, a club achievement day was held in the outdoor skating rink in Wembley, and the following day, interclub competition including Teepee Creek, Sexsmith, La Glace, Beaverlodge, Hythe and Wembley was held at Grande Prairie. Some of the members during that period included Schadecks, Alstads, Harrison, Sasks, Willseys, Lomax, Hennigs, MacAlisters, Roths, Nowoczins, Schoepps, Walroths. Harvey Holloway competed at the Provincial Public Speaking finals one year during that time.



1978-79 Club Awards Day.
Back L-R: Tim Hennig, Sig Hennig, Dave Bateman, Art Bateman, Rodney Schoepp, Ken Schoepp, Edie Taylor.
Middle: Janice Schoepp, Colleen Sunshine, Patty Schultz, Teresa Bateman, Kari Taylor, Airan Bateman.
Front: Barbara Schoepp, Sheena Willsey.

The club folded again in 1969 due to lack of members, only to be re-awakened in 1974. Sigfried Hennig and Art Bateman were largely responsible for the renewed interest in the Beef Club. Membership ranged from 15 to 20 members, with Hennigs, Batemans, Schoepps, Willseys, Van Schaicks and Taylors being some of the people involved. Members of Wembley clubs have a record of outstanding involvement in District and Regional activities, including Public Speaking, Conservation Camps, Club Weeks, as well as having done very well in interclub competition in showmanship, grooming, etc. at achievement days.

The clubs have also been fortunate to have the help of local teachers and other interested people who have provided their knowledge to help the young people in their activities.

Jack Able, the Human Fly

by Jonas H. Webber

Why did they call him that? Well, it was not because he could climb up a brick wall clinging to the crevices between the bricks like a fly, because he couldn't do that any better than you could. He couldn't ride a bronc very far either but he seemed to have a steadfast ambition to do so even though he lacked the instinct. He was a cheerful, carefree, happy-go-lucky character, a Mexican half-breed by nationality.

Back in the middle twenties when Barney, Jim Hogg, Red Orford, my brother Walter and I were making the rounds of all the stampedes from North Pine, B.C. to Peace River, Grande Prairie, Rycroft, and Debolt, we would team up and all go together, either in Barney's big old car, or our old Buick touring car and shared expenses. We didn't always share equally, because any of us who didn't happen to win any prize money just naturally couldn't contribute to the fund. Nobody had any money in the bank and we sure didn't have anything left over from the last stampede.

Jack Able never travelled with us partly because he always seemed to have an extra horse that he didn't need and he would take that along in hopes of being able to sell it for travelling and living expenses. Of course, we couldn't take his horses in the old Buick and nobody drove trucks then so Jack would have to leave a day earlier so as to be there by horseback. Nobody ever seemed to wonder how Jack always had an extra horse that he didn't need.

One time we were at the annual stampede at the old town of Dawson Creek and staying at Bill Risbeck's hotel. Rooms were scarce and crowded and no locks on the doors. My brother Walter and I slept in one room, and the Human Fly and someone else in another room just across the hall. Hotel cafes then weren't like they are now, just a hotel dining room. My brother and I went into the dining room and had breakfast. Then I walked boldly up to the girl at the cash register and in a perfectly unconcerned manner, thrust my left hand into my left pants pocket. I wish I had a photograph of my expression when I suddenly realized that my ever present little roll of Canadian currency had parted company with me during the night. We would have been in a bad spot had it not been that Bill Risbeck was a friend of mine and a very fine fellow. I had no trouble talking him into letting us go and pay him later.

Now I didn't say that Jack Able robbed me. I just intimated that somebody did. I never told you either how Jack got the name "Human Fly".

Well, he was always in the bronc riding and every time Jack's horse came out of the chute and put his head down, Jack took off up in the air. That is how he got the name.

The last I ever heard of the Human Fly, he was away out near Vancouver and was wanted by the police for horse stealing. I understand that horse stealing is against the law in B.C.

Jack did finally get so he could ride some, though. Since writing the foregoing, I have found statistics which indicate that horse stealing must have been illegal in Alberta, too, at that time because Jack was detained in Fort Saskatchewan for two years for engaging in the world's second oldest profession.

Erich E. Andersen

I was raised in the city of Kiel in West Germany. My step-father was a dentist but my dream, even as a young boy, was to have land of my own and to become a farmer. In crowded Germany where land was very expensive this was a dream that could not come true, especially since my family had lost all of their assets during the first World War. But Canada was looking for settlers who would help to open up the West. Advertisements in Europe stated that land was available to anyone who would clear and break it. I was 22 and this seemed the right opportunity for me. With high hopes and in higher spirits, I arrived in Canada on the C.P. boat Montclare in the spring of 1926.

On this boat, I met Werner Stamp, and it turned out that we stayed together for our first eight years in Canada. We were placed by the Lutheran Immigration Board on a farm near Hannover in Ontario where we stayed for one year. "Go West, young man, go West!" was the slogan of the times, so the next half year was spent in Winnipeg, digging basements by hand and pushing wheelbarrows full of concrete.

As harvest time approached, the city would hold us no longer. Claresholm in Southern Alberta had had a very good crop but an early blizzard put a stop to all harvest operations with less than half the crops threshed. We accepted an offer to stay in the area over winter, living in a small bunkhouse, working the odd day on farms, shooting jack rabbits to sell the hides for a bit of income, and waiting for the day when harvesting could be resumed. That day arrived on April 1, and after threshing for 30 consecutive days, we boarded the train north and landed at Wembley which was then the end of the steel, on May 5, 1928.

Our first job was cutting brush on the proposed railroad right-of-way between Wembley and Beaverlodge. At first an old strawstack on the Thornton homestead at Huallen served satisfactorily as our sleeping quarters, but after a few days of rain, we moved into a small horse barn along with six or eight horses being used to pull the fresnos to build the railroad grade. It proved to be a good thing that we had learned to use an axe that winter in Ontario, cutting logs and firewood - cross cut saws and axes were the only tools used for clearing then.

We were very fortunate in finding our next job with some of the nicest people one can expect to find anywhere. For one month, we cleared land for Gordon Hurley, north of Beaverlodge. Gordon and his parents took us into their home and treated us as though we belonged to the family. Mrs. Hurley's pies were just out of this world, and unless we had at least two pieces, we weren't allowed to leave the table.

About mid July, we started to work for Herman Trelle. Little did I dream then that I would remain working for the World "Wheat King" for five years. Werner Stamp and I had purchased a quarter of land, one mile north of Wembley, and it was agreed that he would be farming that land and I would keep on working to bring in the necessary cash. Werner did not lose much time in getting married and raising a family, while I, under Herman Trelle's guidance, became a registered seed grower and grain exhibitor, winning a number of prizes in the years to come, the most coveted one being the Canadian Oat Championship in 1930 and 1931.

The Stamps purchased half a section of land three miles south of Wembley when Mrs. Stamp inherited some money in 1932, so when my job at Trelle's terminated in 1933, it suited us both to dissolve our partnership; Stamps moving to their farm south and I on mine, north of Wembley.

On a trip home to Germany in the winter of 1936-1937, I met my present wife, Helga Johansen. The spunky city girl followed me to Canada and we were married in August 1938 in the old McDougal Church in Edmonton.



Eric Andersen's first home, 1938.

From then on, life became more pleasant and easier. Through our joint efforts, development of the farm made faster progress, and sunshine moved into the drab little log house. Mixed farming was the order of the day; besides four work horses, we kept two or three cows, four to six brood sows, and of course, some chickens. As time went on, we specialized in egg production, keeping one thousand laying hens - an endeavour that brought fair to good returns but which involved a tremendous amount of work - the automatic age with its electricity and running water had not yet arrived, and our hen houses were of more or less makeshift construction, some with straw roofs. One of the daily routines of those long winters was to light a gasoline lantern for each building in the early morning hours, providing the laying hens with the twelve hours of light needed for high egg production.

As we enlarged the building complex in the yard, so also we had to "patch on" to the log house to accommodate our growing family. Karin, Erika, Christian, and Urte made their appearance, and each one brought more happiness into our home.

Memories of those early times include our first neighbours - Ray Mitchell, Pete McKenzie and Ross Beatty, the Bob Kranz store in Wembley, our jaunty canvas-topped model A truck, grand community picnics at Saskatoon Island, and later, chicken suppers and Christmas concerts in the old Wembley Hall.



Early means of conveyance of the Andersen family.

We continued to grow registered and Elite seed, and in 1948, I was honored by the Canadian Seed Growers Association in being awarded a "Robertson Associate Membership". This was also the year we purchased our first tractor - a grey Fordson, three point hitch - we were very proud of our achievements.

In the years to come, my health began to fail and we decided to look for a way of making a living that was somewhat easier than farming. The livestock was disposed of, and arrangements made with neighbours to work the land. I held the position as Land sub-agent for the Government of Alberta for the next ten years. My wife did clerical work at the Grande Prairie Hospital. Our children have all been able to get a good education and enjoy their chosen profession. The three older ones presently live close by, which we enjoy and are thankful for. Urte lives with her family in Campbell River, B.C.

In 1970, Chris took over the farm, and that gave us the opportunity to do some travelling. We saw part of Australia, the United States including Alaska, and South America, and of course, we also went back to Germany. It was lovely to see our relatives and old friends again, but somehow, one feels more free over here, and we have never regretted leaving Europe when we did.

Ethel and George P. Anderson

by Ethel Anderson

We left the farm at Beaverlodge with our three children Jean, Jim and Corrinne, November 11, 1946 to take over the South Wapiti Lumber Company in partnership with George's brothers; Albert and Henry. Two more girls Linda and Carol, were born while in Wembley.

Albert and Henry boarded with us until their mother, Carrie, moved here at a later date.

George never did any actual curling but was an ardent fan of bonspiels, helping with draws and prizes for several years. He was a baseball league commissioner and an umpire of many games. I was an active member of the United Church Women and also in the Riverside Ladies Aid at Albright which I am still involved with.

We moved to Grande Prairie in 1966.

Jean worked at Bunyan's Hardware while going to school. She married Walter Christopherson of Valhalla in 1954. They have three children, Doreen, David, and Shelly, and one grandson Derek. Jean and Walter now live in Hythe.

Jim worked on construction when the roads were being paved around Wembley. He married Joan Miller in 1958. They have five children, Roxi, Laurie, Wendy, Dale and Janice, and three granddaughters Jamie, Kimberly, and Theresa. They live at Fort St. John, B.C.

Corrinne, who worked at the switchboard in the drug store, married Wallace Hawkes in 1958. Wallace was electrocuted at work in 1962. In 1974, Corrinne married Reuben Christopherson. They have four children, Clinton, Clayton, Cheryl, and Connie. They live at Valhalla.

Linda married Norman Stefan of Wembley in 1977. They have one son, Joey, and live in Wembley.

Carol married Wesley Sorenson of Wanham in 1975. They have two children, Steven and Mandy, and live in Grande Prairie.

George passed away December 24, 1978. I still reside in Grande Prairie.

The Archer Story

by John Archer

Ruth and Joseph Archer, with their daughter, Margaret, and son, John, moved to Wembley on December 30, 1925 from the town of Lake Saskatoon.

Jack Archer, as the way everyone knew my dad, was the first lawyer in Lake Saskatoon, having arrived there on the third train to come into the Peace River Country in 1916. The town of Lake Saskatoon was situated four miles north of Wembley and when the railway came to Wembley the whole town of Lake Saskatoon was moved to Wembley. We lived just above the town of Lake Saskatoon and all the buildings had to come up the hill and turn south in front of our home on the farm. I remember seeing our house being moved and two weeks later we left our farm home and moved to Wembley in the middle of winter.

How well do I remember that winter! We had no electricity. Coal and wood heaters and a wood cook stove kept us warm. We had a one holer in the back yard where Eaton's Catalogue was a necessity! Slim Finch delivered water with his team of mules and what language that man used to get them started.

Margaret and I went in the school van to Hillhead School southwest of Wembley. Mr. Mates was the driver and we used to have some great times in that van. The next summer the Hillhead School was moved into Wembley.

Jack Archer had a full time law office in Wembley and had a sub-office in Beaverlodge. He continued to practice law in Wembley until the summer of 1937 when he moved to Beaverlodge. He retired in 1948 and he and Ruth moved to Victoria. Mrs. Archer died in July, 1960 and Jack died in England in December, 1960.



The Archer family, 1936, the year before they moved to Beaverlodge from Wembley. John, Mr. Archer, Bill, Mrs. Archer and Margaret.

In 1926 William was born into the Archer family. He attended school in Wembley and Beaverlodge. He went on to University and took Theology and became a minister in the United Church. In 1946 he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force as a Chaplain and is now a Major in the Canadian Armed Forces in Ottawa. He retired on August 23, 1979.

Margaret and I took all our schooling in Wembley. Margaret took a secretarial course at Alberta College upon completion of her high school. She then worked for the Canada Life Insurance Company in London, England. She married Hugh Ellis and with their family of John, Barbara, and Gillian came to Canada after the War. Mr. Ellis taught school in Grande Prairie for five years. Margaret was killed in a car accident just west of Grande Prairie in 1966.

I remember the good old days in Wembley. We lived right behind the present United Church. I used to carry all the Minister's water for the house from Bill Feist's well and look after his horse all winter. We kept a cow and chickens and it was my chore to look after them. We got loads of green wood during the winter and when spring came, I worked every Saturday throwing wood from the buzzsaw for 25¢ hour at our place and the neighbors. I was really rich after working for ten hours and getting two dollars and fifty cents. My mother's brother, Dr. A.M. Carlisle, was the first doctor in Wembley. He and his wife were a marvelous couple and all Wembley and district were sorry to see them move to Grande Prairie after about ten years in Wembley. He and his wife live at 2162 Brighton Avenue, Victoria, B.C.

Mrs. Jim Storm was my teacher all through high school and what a marvelous teacher she was. After completing school I worked for a year in a Hardware Store in Hythe for $7.50 a week. I spent a year as the boys supervisor at the Indian Residential School in Edmonton and a year at University before joining the R.C.A.F. as a pilot for five years.

In 1947 I opened up a hardware store in Beaverlodge and after 31 years in the business I sold out in 1978. In 1942 I married a childhood pal Jessamy Smith who I knew when I lived at Lake Saskatoon. We were blessed with five boys and one girl. Jessamy and I live in Beaverlodge and are semi-retired. I love to meet my old friends from Wembley and reminisce over old school days.

Mary and Harold Ardley

by Mary Ardley

My dad, William Hallett was English and Welsh. My mother, Marie Ann's family came from France.

Dad was working with iron and metal mixing in Los Angeles and developed ulcers. The doctor gave him a year to live unless he got away from it all. I was ten years old when we started north for Canada. Edmonton was the last city with a little iron foundry. We kept going north and the end of the railroad was the little village of Peace River, on the edge of the Peace River. We took the boat going down river, and in a few days arrived at Fort Vermilion, in northern Alberta. We got a homestead and Mom was the fourth white woman in the country in those days.

Later on we lived quite a few miles out from Fort Vermilion on Buffalo Prairie and there my brother "Bud" William Alfred was born on January 24, 1923. He was the first white child born there and the three of us were



Harold Ardley.

really glad, I was then seventeen. I got so I could talk a little Cree and the two Indian families who lived there taught me how to make moccasins, rabbit snares and weave blankets from rabbit skin, etc.

Dad and I started to do a little trapping so we could trade it in for supplies, as well as the butter we would make and trade. It got so we had a trap line and it would take us five days to get to the start. I was the one who wore snow shoes to break trail in front of the dog team. I did all the skinning and beavers were the worst to skin.

We caught a beautiful dark silver fox on Christmas day which we gave to Mom and later a nice big cross fox which was given to me.

We moved right to Fort Vermilion and started a little lunch room. This place was two empty buildings to start with. Gradually over a period of years, we made it into a little store, restaurant, pool room and rooms upstairs.

In the spring of 1926, I was twenty years old and decided I would get out on my own. I was thinking of going to the coast but when I got to Edmonton, I was walking down the street and at the Canadian Bank of Commerce I saw a sign saying they wanted a stenographer, so I went in to try and was told to start the next day.

I was sent out to Wembley right away and stayed with Mrs. Sinclair for quite a while, who was running a little post office across the street from the bank. I had been there around a couple of years when I had a phone call from Louie Bourassa at Peace River, the mail man from Fort Vermilion, that my father had died out on the trap line. Louie was leaving with the last of the mail to Fort Vermilion before freeze up, so the boss, Lamont, drove me across country to Peace River and the bank gave me six months leave for me to be with my mother. Of course that trip took us several days on a little motor boat. I came back with Louie, with horses and sleigh before spring break up as the trail was just a bunch of muskegs to cross and bits of prairie, it was impossible to use in the summer. Getting close to Peace River it was quite a lot below zero and no snow so was a cold walk. It took most of a week to get to Peace River. My father was not quite fifty years old when he died.

I can't say the name of the manager of the bank when I first arrived in Wembley but later H.T. Lamont was manager and has gone on a number of years ago. John L. Kerr, was accountant and later manager; Hugh Mortimer was teller. I was there over five years.



Mary Hallett.

During that time, Harold Ardley was transferred to the branch as accountant and on July 27, 1931, in the evening after work, we got married in the little Anglican church. Bill Feist, who operated one of the grain elevators, and his wife "Tiny" held open house for us, which was wonderful. As Wembley was the end of the railroad, everybody knew me so we didn't go to the hotel that night or the one in Grande Prairie. Mrs. Trelle, wife of Herman Trelle who became a wheat king, took us out to their place so no one knew where we were. Both of the Trelles have gone on.

We were transferred to Fort Saskatchewan, where our Joan Marie was born. Then we went to the branch at Bawlf where Bill was born, then to Kitscoty and finally to Calgary, where young Harold and Bob were born.

Later Harold went into the Air Force. When he returned he was back in the bank again for a while. Then he retired from the bank.

Benjamin Clarence and Gertrude Nell Austin

by Beth Sheehan

There is little written record available on this couple who came to the Peace River Country in 1911 or 1912, after arriving in Edmonton in 1910, possibly from Grande Mère, Quebec.

Ben Austin was born in 1863 in New Amsterdam, New York. He was a paper maker by trade and worked at this in both New York state and Grande Mère, Quebec.

On November 4, 1896, he married "Gertie" (maiden name unknown) in Glen Falls, New York. Eventually they arrived in Lake Saskatoon, Alberta, and on April 4, 1913, Ben applied for homestead rights to SW 30-71-8, but after receiving his title in 1919, he did not stay with it. Instead, he operated a pool hall for Ernie Hawkinson in the village of Lake Saskatoon. When the Northern Alberta Railway extended west from Grande Prairie, Wembley became the end of steel and businesses from Lake Saskatoon moved there, including the pool hall. In its new location, however, it became the United Church. The Austins moved to Wembley too, where Ben did carpentry and cabinet work.

Ben and Gertie attended services in the United Church, where Ben's strong voice was an asset to the choir. By contrast, Gertie had a very delicate, bird-like voice which suited her minute stature. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on November 7, 1946, when about 100 friends gathered at the Wembley Community Hall to give them a surprise party. Local merchant Bob Kranz, on behalf of their friends, presented them each with a purse of gold and a gold satin comforter.

A neighbor recalled that Ben loved to hunt but seldom had the money for shells, so when he could afford them he made sure each one counted. It is said that with four shells he always got four to six ducks.

Another remembrance is of Ben as an avid horseshoe player. If a farmer wanted repairs done at Bill Moss's blacksmith shop, he often had to wait for Ben and Bill to finish a very important horseshoe game in progress behind the blacksmith shop.

Ben died in June, 1949 at the age of 86. Gertie survived him for nine years and was buried on April 1, 1958 in the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery, beside her husband.



Mr. and Mrs. Ben Austin, at Wembley.

Fred William Barber

Fred Barber filed on SW 4-71-8-W6 on October 15, 1917, proved up and received title in 1921.

Mr. Barber taught at Hillhead School. All the pupils I talked with spoke very highly of him, but none knew too much about his personal life or even where he came from. After leaving this area, he went to Rumsey, Alberta to teach and while there, he married a former sweetheart. In the early 1940's, Fred brought his wife back here to visit old friends.

Fred Barber has since passed away and is buried at Olds, Alberta.

H. Taylor now owns this land.



Fred Barber.

The Ross Beatty Family

by Mary Cuthbert

Ross Beatty came from the Melfort area of Saskatchewan and began freighting to Grande Prairie and Peace River as early as 1906. By the year of 1910 the call of homesteading caused him to file on land in the then Lake Saskatoon, now Wembley district, right where the Saskatoon Island turnoff joins the main highway. In 1915 he and my mother Lucille Beatty (nee Anderson) began their married life on this farm. Four of us, Mary, Nell, Reg, and Jean, were all raised there. We attended Wembley school. I completed grade twelve there and had the very capable Mrs. Elizabeth Storm for my teacher for the last five years. The others in our family finished school in Grande Prairie and Edmonton after my parents left the farm.

For twenty-five years Dad and Mom farmed there and nearly all with horses. A group of seven farmers purchased a large separator and a steam engine to do the threshing. They called themselves "The Big Seven". The machines were all stored on our farm. The only other name I remember of the group is Alex Craig, a neighbour to the east. The machine threshed a good deal of grain a day and required twenty men to keep it going.

Our home was a log one but we did have a shingled roof. I recall it as a cosy, friendly, home where many young people gathered on Sundays, and somehow my mother always seemed to have ample food to feed everyone. People that often visited were Dick Roberts, the Paul Boys, Pat and Joan Frewer, Doreen Feist, Jack Rogers, Monte Venus, Margaret and John Archer, Violet Jebb, and Betty Riggs.

In the early days before the railroad moved to Wembley many farmers from Beaverlodge and Hythe stopped at our home when hauling grain to Grande Prairie. They needed to get warm, to rest and feed their horses and enjoy a hot meal and a visit.

Ball games, weiner roasts, swimming parties to Lake Saskatoon and skating in the winter were some of the fun things I remember. Dances of course were very popular, mostly to the music of Jack Penson and Mel Rodacker. As we went on in our teens, we often attended two or three a week. There were three of us girls and we soon knew all the young people for miles around. Our parents often attended the same dances keeping a careful eye on all that went on.

Our parents were quite active in the community. My mother belonged to the Women's Institute and the Ladies Aid to the United Church. She usually had the June meeting I remember. Dad served on the municipal council and was a member of the Agricultural Society.

We all attended the United Church Sunday School from the time we were little. I recall the Reverends Symons and Huston.

Dr. Carlisle was the only doctor and once he put us all in quarantine for six weeks when Nell had scarlet fever. None of us could attend school and Dad had to get special permission to haul grain to the local elevator. All of us, Mary, Nell, Reg, and Jean were born on our farm with Mrs. Watson and Mrs. Bousefield doing midwifery duties.

My parents, Ross and Lucille Beatty, both passed on in 1974 and 1976 and also our sister, Jean, as a young woman in 1955.



Mary, Nell, Reg and Jean Beatty on our two ponies "Teddy and Tommy". They saw me through twelve years of school but were retired soon after. Our house in background about 1930.



At Lake Saskatoon, 1935.
Left to Right: Eddie Gitzel, Margaret Archer, John Archer, Nell Beatty, Curt Neilson and Mary Beatty.

The Bissett Family

by Jean (Bissett) Lawrence and George Bissett

The Bissetts were not really Peace River Pioneers. They came after the Northern Alberta Railroad had been extended from Spirit River through Grande Prairie and Wembley to Hythe. The town of Lake Saskatoon had been moved to the railway and named Wembley.

Arthur and Margaret Bissett and their young son, George, drove their Model 'A' Ford from Vancouver in the spring of 1929. Every juke box was playing "When its Spring time in the Rockies" as they went through.

Dad always had "itchy" feet and they had come to Vancouver to be near Mother's parents who are now dead. He owned a number of houses in Vancouver from which he drew rent. Work was getting scarce even then in Vancouver for young people. Uncle Andy had the contract for the Baptist Church in Grande Prairie and they went to work on that.

Dad's other occupation was the butcher business so when the "Service Meat Market" was for sale in Wembley they bought that and rented rooms from Mrs. Jergan Johnson who had run a boarding house during the building of the railway.

Wembley was an excellent farming district. Herman Trelle had won the World's Champion Wheat Crown the year before at the Chicago World's Fair. There were very good crops that fall and Dad made half the price he paid for the shop.

That was the last of their good luck! No one realized in 1929 that a Market Crash on the New York Stock Exchange would be felt in the remote Peace River. The farmers were usually paid for their grain in two payments. One on delivery and the other in the spring. They never got their second payment.

People went blithely on! Mother and Dad went back to Vancouver for the winter leaving George in charge of the market. He sent a snap of himself standing in front of the market in his shirtsleeves on Christmas day. They were delighted. They came originally from Manitoba and Saskatchewan and had never experienced a "Chinook."

In the spring of 1930 Dad shipped a car of household effects. His son-in-law, Glover Lawrence and wife Jean and three year old daughter, Georgene, had decided to come, too, and people by the name of Hodges of Beaverlodge also joined in. Besides he picked up some good second hand flooring and some doors, a second hand Model T that he bought for $100, and two sheep. All this for $300 freight.

The next summer Dad spent training the two boys in the butcher business. Glover had bought a business in Hythe, then the "end of steel". By fall the price of steers had fallen, and a $100 steer was selling for $25 and everything else in accordance.



Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bissett and son-in-law Glover Lawrence.

We never had a crop failure and there was never a drought as on the Prairies. Gardens were always wonderful. But soon people who had come in from the Prairies and were not yet established were faced with "Relief". They could work their taxes out on the roads and there were road camps which we were thankful for, as homesteaders could not afford to buy meat. Wild fruit was plentiful. The trees at Saskatoon Lake were black with saskatoons and housewives tried to see how many different ways they could do them up. Strawberries and raspberries were plentiful also. On the banks of the Wapiti even black currants grew. Chokecherries made good pancake syrup, if cooked with apples they would jell. People made coffee by roasting barley, and ground wheat made hot cereal. There were mills where wheat could be ground for flour. Vinegar was made from "Mother". In fact if you were desperate you could live quite well by buying sugar, salt and the occasional pound of tea. A dollop of yeast was saved from the last batch.

The barter system was in effect and homesteaders sold the trees they cut down as poles for wood in exchange for groceries and occasionally, meat.

Mother, Dad and George took up homesteads near the Wapiti. Dad and Mother had been brought to homesteads in Manitoba as children in 1884. Then in 1903 after they were married, Dad took up a homestead in Saskatchewan when it was still Assiniboia, so this homestead in Alberta was the third time they had homesteaded. They built a log house after George and Thelma (Thoreson) were married in December, 1930. They and Dad and Mother took turns in living on them to "prove them up."

Mrs. Slim Finch was an American nurse who came over the Edson trail. She was somewhat of a character and told quite colorful tales. Jack Crummy and George decided to grow tooth brush mustaches. Mrs. Finch caught Jack in Jen Oxley's general store with a good crowd around and intimated if he'd put a little chicken manure on it, it might help it to grow. George knew he was in for it too and went out of the way to speak to her but she bided her time till there was a crowd around before she gave him the same advice.

When Jean was expecting her second child she came down to Wembley to Dr. Carlisle to have the baby, expecting to go to Grande Prairie Hospital. A blizzard blew up and the Doctor went out and got Granny Watson, an Irish lady who sometimes acted as midwife. Granny Watson made pots of tea and the Doctor played the piano while they waited. Next morning Georgene and her little friend, Audrey Purves, went around and informed the neighbours of her baby brother. Not to be out done Audrey said, "We are going to have one, too. My Daddy is in the hospital right now!"

Curling was the pastime in winter and Dad, Thelma, and George all curled. Dad had a rink of kids he called the colts consisting of Betty and Wellington Riggs and another kid. Dad sure enjoyed those kids and I think they enjoyed it, too. Mother ran the shop as she had learned to do in Saskatchewan during World War I. Mrs. Riggs, Mrs. Edgar, Mrs. Bunyan and Mrs. Mart Smith before she died, used to drop in and keep her company. Mother belonged to the Church Women's Association and the Women's Institute. Reverend and Mrs. Carr were at the parsonage for most of the time and were followed by

Reverend and Mrs. Huston. We saw their daughter, Helen, not many years ago when she became a medical missionary and came back on deportation work.

I think it was about the summer of 1936, I was visiting at Wembley and Dad took us on a picnic to the Red Willow River. The Canadian Girls in Training were having a camp there and some of the girls were swimming. One of the girls got into difficulties and called for help. Dad had learned to swim in the Rideau Canal before he was six. He dived in, clothes and all and succeeded in pulling her out safely. They said he should have had recognition for it but they were afraid mothers would be afraid for their daughters and that would be the end of Canadian Girls in Training camp which the girls enjoyed so much.

In 1943 Dad sold the shop to Dick Richardson, and he and Mother moved to Spirit River where they bought a shop. George had tried to enlist but wasn't accepted because of an accident, so he and Thelma were working at war work.

They were very happy in Spirit River but Mother had a bad accident when she slipped on ice. Dad took her to Vancouver when Thelma and George came back to run the shop. In 1955 they came back to be near Jean and George in their old age. I don't think Dad would have changed his years in the Peace for the comforts of the Coast, and to Mother, it was being near her family.

The Frank Boyd Family

Thomas Franklin Boyd, born in Arundel, Quebec married Flora Cameron, born in Lake View, Quebec, in 1910.

They left Quebec for B.C. in 1911, with infant son Stanley, where Frank worked in lumber camps for the next two years.

When Helen, born in 1913, was three months old, the family decided to join Frank's mother and brothers at Lake Saskatoon. On September 8, 1914, he filed on SE 20-71-9-W6 in the Canyon Creek area, just north of Ken Edgerton's building site. In 1917, Frank traded quarters with Henry (Pat) Patterson, SW 29-71-8-W6, because of the good spring water there.

The rest of their 11 children were born here; Charlie, Pearl, Ruth, Roy, Doris (Toots), Murray, Jean, Louise (Bunny) and Patricia (Babe).

The five oldest children drove to school at Lake Saskatoon in a van, with Stan as teamster. When the railroad came and school was much closer, they came to Wembley, although Stan and Helen finished at Lake Saskatoon. Flora passed away in 1938, and Frank in 1963.



The Boyd family.
Standing: Stanley, Bunny, Charlie, Ruth, Roy, Helen, Murray, Jean.
Sitting: Pearl, Babe, Doris.



Flora Boyd.

Stanley and his wife, Louise live in Chetwynd and have no family.

Helen married Gordon Moore and they are living in Vancouver. They have five children.

Charlie lives in Fort St. John and has a family of three.

Pearl married Bill Donaldson and lives in Grande Prairie. They have one daughter.

Ruth, who passed away in June, 1980 was married to Frank Morrison and lived in Trail, B.C. They had no children.

Roy and wife Beryl live in Grande Prairie and have a family of seven.

Doris (Toots) married Jack Miller and has seven children. Jack passed away on August 31, 1974. Doris lives in Grande Prairie.

Murray and wife Faye live in Fort St. John and have seven children.

Jean and husband George Alexander live in Corona, California and have one daughter.

Louise (Bunny) and husband Bill Robertson live in Chetwynd and have seven children.

Patricia (Babe) married John Koenig and they live at Hudson Hope. They have two children.



Frank Boyd.

The Roy Boyd Family

Roy Boyd and Beryl Perves were both born and grew up in the Wembley area. Roy joined the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in 1940. He served overseas for about one and a half years in England, North Africa, Sicily and Italy. On Boxing Day, 1943, he was wounded in Ortona, Italy. He spent five months in hospitals in Italy and England. He arrived back in Canada in May, 1944, and spent one more year in hospitals in Calgary and Edmonton. He was discharged July, 1945.

Roy married Beryl Purves December 24, 1944. He bought his father's home quarter after leaving the army and they lived there until 1956 when they moved into Wembley. In 1968 they moved to Grande Prairie.

Roy and Beryl had seven children. Cheryl married Frank Gorrie. They now live in Burlington, Ontario with their three children, Janet, Todd and Dionne. Donna married Gerald Campbell. They have two children, Clinton and Roxanne and live in Grande Prairie. David, the only son, lives in Whitehorse. He has a daughter, Tonia, by a former marriage. Tonia lives in Grande Prairie. Valerie married Norman Palmer and they have two children, Kevin and Lori. Vivian married Kerry Sandboe and they have two children, Cameron and Tracy. Marilyn married Kurt Pederson and they have two children, Nicole and Debra. Valerie, Vivian, Marilyn and their families all live in Grande Prairie. Susan, the youngest, lives at home and spends a lot of time travelling.

Ardrin Brink

Early one morning I was called to the office of the Edmonton Produce Company, for whom I had worked every fall grading turkeys for the Christmas trade, I was asked if I would consider going north to a place called Wembley, in the Peace River Country, to open up an egg candling station, and also look after about thirty-five hundred chickens. That seemed like quite an order, however, I said I would think it over and let the Company know shortly, which I did. I decided I would make a trip up and look the situation over. In due time, I left Edmonton for Wembley, met some very fine people there, and spent some time with the farmers to see their reaction to a business of this sort in their midst. While many of them had only enough chickens to supply their own needs, they were willing to augment their flocks and give it a try. I went back to Edmonton pleased with the prospects of a needed commodity. The Mayor of Wembley, Henry Rollin, was also pleased to have a new venture come to his town.

In March of 1945, my wife and I boarded the train at Edmonton amid a crowd of loved ones and well wishers who thought we were going to a "wilderness" and felt sorry for us, little knowing what a vast wonderful country the north is. I know we felt that way too, but it didn't take long to change our minds. We arrived in Wembley on a Wednesday afternoon and when we checked in at the hotel, there was a message for us to spend the evening at the Reg Bunyan home. We were very glad to accept it as there was a tinge of loneliness in both of us after having left our beloved daughter Beryl, her husband Jim, and a darling grandson George, and our good friends. Soon we were at the Bunyan home, and a game of bridge was suggested which sounded good. Pretty soon I was the dummy, and I was looking around as anyone in a strange place would do, when I looked at Lil and yelled "there's Norman McClellan's picture on the wall", Mrs. Bunyan (Jean, as we know her now) said, "yes, he's my brother, do you know him?" We said, "Yes, we know Norm and Lena very well". That was a long time ago and we have had a wonderful friendship through the years. Even though many changes have taken place, we love to get together and talk over old times.

In due time, the chickens arrived and the candling station was completed and in operation. There was also a "Chicken Plucker" run by electricity, which took the feathers off the chickens in a very few minutes. It was quite an added attraction for many of the town folk. We nearly always had an audience. I have forgotten the names of some of the employees, but one I remember was Olga Gurakowsky, who was very proficient in the egg candling department.

There were many different forms of entertainment in Wembley, such as the finger-lickin' chicken dinners put on by the Ladies Aid of the Church, which were a highlight and widely attended. One very happy event I recall was the fiftieth Wedding anniversary of a much esteemed couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Austin, which was held in Wembley's fine hall, where an extremely large crowd gathered to pay homage. Many gifts were presented to them. Among them — two beautiful gold comforters. Mr. and Mrs. Austin are gone now, as are many of the fine folk of former years.

The chickens had grown and were almost ready for market when the farmer's strike came, crippling the egg and chicken business.

We left Wembley in late 1948 after many happy times making many friends and being part of a marvelous country and a wealth of experience.

Edward E. Buchanan

The first I heard of the Peace River Country was early in 1914 before the first World War. Some of the real estate offices in Edmonton had models and drawings of the new Town to be called Dunvegan on the Peace River.

The railway under construction called the E.D. and B.C. (Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia) was supposed to go that way.

I had no thought at that time of ever seeing Dunvegan, but a few years later when I did, I found the railway passed it by some twenty miles south. The survey stakes of the lots for sale on the north slopes of the Peace River Valley would give a mountain goat some trouble to climb!

Some of the old timers will remember the nick name of the E.D. and B.C. — Extremely Dangerous and Badly Constructed. With ties laid on the ground and muskeg, and with no ballast, particularly in the spring, it seemed you were off the track longer than you were on it.

In 1921 the writer was stationed at St. Paul de Metis, (now St. Paul, Alberta) on the 15th of March, 1922. I received instruction from Police Headquarters in Edmonton that I was being transferred to Grande Prairie Sub-Division Headquarters, and to report there on March 22, 1922.

Being single at that time, it did not take long to pack my bag and trunk and get on the train to Edmonton. I had received four days leave of absence to visit my oldest brother in Calgary whom I had not seen since the end of the war.

On March 21, 1922 I boarded the E.D. and B.C. at Edmonton, arriving in Grande Prairie on March 22. I

brought with me a pure bred blood hound. This was one of the four trained dogs purchased by the police.

Sometime later I became good friends with Mr. J.B. (Jimmy) Oliver, and he told me that one day he was standing out in front of his furniture store and the man with him was one of the biggest Moonshiners in the district. I passed on the sidewalk across the street, followed by the bloodhound, and just for a joke Jimmy said, "See that new policeman. That dog he has is especially trained to hunt out stills" and the other chap's reply was, "Why don't someone shoot the Son of a B." I never did find out if he meant me or the dog.

Having been engaged to a lovely young lady in Edmonton for well over a year, I returned to Edmonton in August, on leave of absense for our wedding, and after our honeymoon, returned with my bride, Christene, to Grande Prairie.

There was no Wembley in 1922, and we patrolled that area at that time from Grande Prairie. I recall the phone call we received on May 7, 1923, from the home of Bill Watson on the lower Beaverlodge road, reporting a murder in the district south of their farm. Inspector H.N. Trickey, was the Officer in Charge at Grande Prairie Sub-Division Headquarters, at that time, and I drove him and another member of the force to the scene of the murder. I have no intentions of mentioning any names, or giving any details, of any crimes that I investigated while stationed in the district, which totaled twelve years and eight months. To do so, would only bring back to some people, unpleasant memories of matters best forgotten.

In June, 1923 I took charge of Brainard Detachment, which was situated on the old Trail of '98. A large area to patrol by saddle horse and sometimes an additional pack horse for my supplies.

When the railroad was extended to Wembley, and many buildings moved from Lake Saskatoon, the Detachment at Beaverlodge was closed and Constable Chas. A. Martin (now deceased) was transferred to Wembley. In November, 1924 it was decided to close Brainard Detachment, and I returned to Grande Prairie, as the building at Wembley was not completed for a married man. I took over charge of Wembley in March 1925, and Constable Martin moved to Grande Prairie. He was single, so lived in the barracks there.

In November, 1925 a new officer arrived at Grande Prairie, and asked me to return to Headquarters with him. Constable Jack Light came from Drumheller to Wembley. Later a Detachment was opened at Hythe. Constable Light was moved there and I was returned to Wembley in March, 1928.

Our four children, two boys and two girls were all born in the Grande Prairie hospital. The first three were no problem, as we were living in Grande Prairie at the time, but with our youngest daughter Jean, it was a rush. My good wife told me that afternoon, that the baby was on the way. The roads were blocked with snow. It was lucky it was train night. I phoned Grande Prairie to have a car waiting at the station. We arrived there at 11:30 P.M. A quick drive to the Hospital, and Jean arrived shortly after midnight, on the 14th of January, 1930.

The first Police Detachment building in Wembley was across the lane, just west of Dr. Carlisle's home. My horse barn was at the back of the lot, a small door at the rear to throw out the manure, and directly across the lane was Dr. Carlisle's outdoor plumbing. Most of the oldtimers will remember the Doctor for his Baritone



Ed E. Buchanan, wife Christene, Bill, Ted, Rosemarie and Jean.

singing voice, but little did they know, that when sitting in his Wee House about 6:30 a.m. he was practising his Do, Re, Me's. I would call across to him good morning, he would reply, then continue practising his scales, so the old adage of singing in the bathroom was common at that time.

The house we lived in at that time had only one bedroom and was not suitable for a growing family, so after a talk with Bob Kranz, he agreed to build us a home directly across the road east of Dr. Carlisle's. Unfortunately, from there I could no longer hear the Doctors morning recital.

There was little winter sports activity, and having belonged to the curling club, and badminton club in Grande Prairie, this matter was discussed with some of the business people. I recall when the grain elevators were built there was a surplus of lumber. H.T. Lamont, the manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, arranged for a loan of $800.00 to purchase the material and with the volunteer labour, a two sheet curling rink, with a small waiting room, was built and we were in business. Many enjoyable games were played, and we even sponsored a Bonspiel, and I had a time to arrange for 23 entries, to play on two sheets of ice.

H.W. Rogers, the druggist, and his wife, both ardent tennis players, did not take much coaxing to organize a Badminton Club, and we arranged to rent the hall for the nights it was not in use for a small fee. The curling and badminton was a great boost for winter activities for a small village with a friendly population. It attracted farmers from around the district, and some badminton players from as far away as Beaverlodge. The Grain Company at Sexsmith had donated a silver Cup. The Cup was returned to Sexsmith at the end of each season, then two teams had to enter a challenge. With Chas. Ward as skip of one team, and Bill Palmer skip of the second team, we put in a challenge at the start of the season in November. I played third for Chas. Ward, Dan Chambers second and Bill Watson lead. Bill Palmer had

Bill Moss for third, George Neilson second, and Alex Hutchinson as lead. We went to Sexsmith, and returned with the Cup. We were obliged to defend it once a week. This we did, and held the Cup for the entire season, until the ice melted in April.

Our club did not have much of a fund at that time, and as the defending teams, we felt obliged to entertain our challengers, who came from as far away as Spirit River by train. So each of us contributed to the cost of the dinner, etc. at the Hotel. Once each week over the winter proved quite expensive, but all the members were such good sports, that all fought hard to hold on to the cup for the entire season.

Wembley did not escape the outbreak of smallpox in 1928, which reached from Grande Prairie to the B.C. Border. The Indians, with the least resistance, could spread it as they roamed the country at will. By saddle horse I rounded up some 250, and had them camp on the south flat of the river, south of the Rio Grande Store and Post Office. I phoned from there to the Headquarters at Grande Prairie for help, and Constable S.L. Grayson (now a retired Superintendent) was sent from Spirit River. Returning to Wembley, I contacted Dr. Carlisle, who was the Health Officer, and an additional supply of vaccine was sent in from Edmonton. Dr. Carlisle vaccinated me, and I vaccinated him, before heading out for Rio Grande. We also had the help of the Provincial Nurse from Halcourt, Miss Watherston. We found that some of the Indians had slipped away in the darkness. One family hid below the bridge, and if I remember correctly, they all later died.

I obtained a supply of vaccine and needles from the Doctor, and tracking the Indians northwest, advised the settlers and trappers after they had informed me the Indians had passed by. I vaccinated the various people I contacted. Had a little fun with some of the married couples, explaining to the wife that a mark would be left on the arm, so that some of the ladies, who were in the habit of wearing a sleeveless gown to a party or dance, might want to have the vaccination done just above the knee. But do you know that as I was not a doctor, not one of them went along with my suggestion!

I finally caught up with the group of Indians, and had no trouble convincing them to be vaccinated.

The telephone central closed at eight o'clock each night, but Dr. Carlisle's phone was plugged into the line for any emergency. I was working in my front garden one evening, when he called from across the street, that I was wanted on the phone. It was the Justice of the Peace from Beaverlodge reporting a murder that had just happened. As Dr. Carlisle was also the coroner for the district, I asked him to get his bag, and accompany me. He said afterwards, it was the ride of his life that he had with me on that trip to Beaverlodge.

Wembley being the end of the steel, a number of new settlers disembarked there for Elmworth, and other districts south west. Whenever I had the opportunity, I used to speak to these people, obtaining their names, and the description of their land. One young English lad from London, with no experience, built himself a cabin out of poplar logs, laying only two poles for the side, and slanting poles to a peak. It was just barely high enough to stand up in. He put oat bundles he had worked for on the roof poles, with some dirt thrown on top. He had sent to Eaton's for a small cook stove. His door was too small to get it in his cabin, so he had to cut out some of his logs to get the stove in, then fill up the hole. There was no floor in the cabin, so he drove four poles into the ground, used some rope to make a kind of hammock, with four gunny sacks filled with straw for a mattress. His bed was then so short, the only way he could sleep was curled up in a ball. The second winter he was there, I received a call on November 2 that he was missing. I followed his tracks in the snow. He was following deer tracks, but in the wrong direction. The temperature at this time was about 25 below zero, and when I found him, he was face down, still clutching his rifle under his right arm, frozen solid. All the clothing he had on was a light shirt, and a pair of blue jeans, and a light pair of shoes. His heavy clothing was still at his cabin. October 31 had been a very mild day, and it appeared he had decided to go hunting. The weather changed very suddenly that afternoon, resulting in the tragedy.

One afternoon, returning from a trip in the pouring rain with the chains on my car, I turned the corner between the Beaver lumber yard and the livery barn, and there was a man standing in the mud in the middle of the road. He was in his shirt sleeves, no hat on, and looking up into the sky, soaked to the skin. My thoughts were, "here is a mental case I will have to take care of". I pulled up alongside of him, and lowered the window in the door of my car. He looked at me, and in reply to my query if there was anything wrong, he said, "No Sir, I'm just enjoying it. I just arrived from the dry belt in Saskatchewan, and I haven't seen a rain like this for eight years." Relieved, I shook hands with him, welcomed him to the district, and told him not to hesitate to get in touch with me if I could be of any assistance.

One of the things that few people realized, is the part the wife of a policeman on Detachment, plays in carrying out his duties. Not only does she have to look after the home, but also answer the telephone, taking down complaints, all kinds of calls for help, sometimes even mental case calls. Among the members of the force who have experienced this, we refer to our wives as unpaid Special Constables.

The pictures of the ferries in the brochure brought to mind when the first ferry was installed on the Wapiti River south of Wembley, and the first operator, Bob Shaw, who had an artificial leg. About midnight sometime later, I was aroused, by a man reporting that Mr. Shaw had been found dead in bed. I called Dr. Carlisle, also phoned the undertaker in Grande Prairie to come. Then I went to a small shack in Wembley, where I aroused and told to get dressed a railroad conductor, who had lost his leg in a train accident, at the Wembley station the year before. I told him that I had a job for him, as the ferry still had to be in service that morning. When we arrived at the ferryman's house, the body was still in bed. Dr. Carlisle confirmed that Mr. Shaw died from natural causes, and no inquest would be required. Bill Henderson, the replacement I had brought along, refused to enter the building until the body was removed, so I said, "Don't worry, I'll wait here until the undertaker arrives, then the cabin is yours to move into." His appointment as operator of the ferry was confirmed by the Government Department, and he was still the operator when I left Wembley in October 1934. Memories — Memories.

One of the pleasant memories of our stay in Wembley, when shortly after we moved into the large two story house, a young lady who worked in the Bank asked my wife if she could have a room with us. Her parents lived north of Fort Vermillion, and she was homesick. A few months later, she and her young man, who was the ac-

countant at the Bank, and had relatives in the district, asked us if they could get married in our home. So it was our pleasure to have the minister come to our home, and with my wife and I as witnesses, Mary Hallett and Harold A. Ardley were joined in holy wedlock.

Over the years, we have kept in touch with each other, visiting at various places we have lived. They retired to Victoria, some ten years ago, and we have called for a visit each September. At Victoria, we also drop in to see Henry and Ida Rollin. Many will remember Henry, the barber in Wembley, and Ida who was in charge of the Drapery Department in Bob Kranz store. Henry used to keep my hair trimmed in Wembley, and when in Victoria I always get a free hair cut. Then he closes up shop, and we go salmon fishing. He knows where the good fish run, and how to catch them, so we never fail to come back with a goodly supply. He is so well known for his fishing on Wednesday and Sundays, that in the evening, after he gets home, his telephone never stops ringing, from people that know him, asking what he caught that day, where he caught them, and what bait he used. I told him it was as bad as being a Policeman, you could hardly sit down to a meal without the phone ringing.

On our fortieth wedding anniversary, our family, relatives and friends, surprised us at our cottage at Pigeon Lake, in August, 1962. That evening I informed my good wife that I still had a week holiday, so we left Monday morning, driving north for the first time since we left Wembley in 1934. We visited friends at Grande Prairie, Beaverlodge, Hythe, Pouce Coupe, and Dawson Creek. On the return journey, we dropped in to see Ma Brainard, the Macleans at Beaverlodge. Driving into Wembley, the first person we recognized was Mrs. Wallace Edgar, working in her garden. While we were talking to her, a short elderly man, who I did not remember stopped to listen to our conversation, then he took off on the run down town. I jokingly remarked to Mrs. W. Edgar, he's likely gone down town, to tell the people Buchanan, the Policeman, is back in town so watch out.

I toured the Peace River and Grande Prairie districts on business in 1964, when as Superintendent of all Correction Institutions for the Province of Alberta, looking for the most suitable site to build a Correctional Institution in the North. It was decided that Peace River was the most suitable, and I flew there a few years later for the official opening.

About our family — On August 19, 1979, Christene and I will celebrate our 57th Wedding Anniversary. Our happy life together, has not been without much sorrow. The first break in our family, came on November 18, 1938, at Westlock, when our 11½ year old daughter, Rosemarie, became unconscious at four p.m. I wrapped her in a blanket, and carried her to the hospital, a short distance, and the Doctors were notified. She passed away at 8:45 p.m. from a diabetic coma, of which there had been no warning.

To fill the vacancy in our family, we were blessed with a son on September 8, 1941, Robert Andrew.

Shortly after the outbreak of war our son Bill (William H.) enlisted in the Army, shortly after transferred to the R.C.A.F. Our second son Ted (Edward V.) two years later, at age 18, enlisted in the R.C. Navy.

In May, 1944, after ten years at Westlock, I was transferred to Lethbridge Sub-Division Headquarters, and there later was appointed second in command of the Sub-Division.

Fortunately our two sons returned home safely, after the war was over. Bill had one year in the University of Alberta before enlisting, applied for re-entry, but as there was a long waiting list, he went to work. He met an English, Lethbridge born, very pretty young lady, and they were married on September 4, 1946. Shortly after, he received word from the University of Alberta, and they moved to Edmonton. They were blessed with a daughter, Heather, born September 9, 1951, then a son William Edward on January 2, 1957.

At nine a.m. on January 25, 1960, our son Bill died suddenly. He had a slight chill about 11 p.m. on Saturday the 23rd, stayed in bed over the weekend and died Monday morning. The doctor and coroner informed me it was from a new form of virus pneumonia which flooded the lungs, and even if they had been with him at the time, there was nothing they could have done.

Alyce, our daughter-in-law, a wonderful girl, devoted the next 12½ years to bringing up her children, did not go out with anyone, or go anywhere except to our home, or to our cottage at Pigeon Lake, during the school holidays. Just before Christmas, 1971, she met a widower at her neighbours home, and on April 26, 1972 they were married. Frank McLeod was a fireman with the City of Edmonton Fire Department, and about 18 months later he and some other fireman, suffered smoke inhalation, in an explosive fire, and he passed away in the hospital, November 7, 1974.

Our son Ted (Edward) married a Lethbridge girl, they have three daughters, one is married, and has a three year old daughter.

Our daughter Jean married a wonderful man, a grain farmer east of Lethbridge on May 16, 1957. They were in the habit of spending four to six weeks in Arizona every January and February. The first Friday in February, 1977, they returned to our home after a trip by motor home, through south east U.S.A., across the south and after a month near Phoenix, came to visit us. At 4:20 a.m. the following Monday, hearing a noise, I went into our living room, and found Elmer our son-in-law, face down on the rug, having suffered a massive stroke. He passed away in Hospital, on May 3, 1977. Jean, very active in her Church, has faced up to her loss, and is carrying on very well with the farm.

Our son Bob (Robert Andrew), renewed ties with Wembley. He met, and later married, Joyce Rehaume, a graduate nurse from the Royal Alexander Hospital in Edmonton, on August 2, 1968. Joyce is a daughter of Blanche and Henry Rehaume, who farmed a short distance north of Wembley. They are retired now, and living north of Grande Prairie. Joyce and Bob have three sons, Kevin, Kent, and Keith, all December babies.

Our grand-daughter Heather, married eight years ago, has one son and two daughters. So all in all, we now have four grandsons, four granddaughters, and four great-grand children.

Personal Reflections

by John Bunyan

When asked to write about memories of Wembley why would a peace-loving man like myself immediately remember all the childhood fights I had? I suppose the score came out even in the altercations with George Miller, Art Pitchko, Frank Squires, Bill Buchanan, and especially, Doug Johnson, who was my next door neighbour, companion and opponent. In fact, our scraps

were so well known that we ere coerced into mixing it up in a boxing match held in the village hall on amateur night.

Doug Johnson and I used to explore the "Green Bush" an early leafing bluff, east of town, many times in summer and trapped weasels and muskrats during winter. One particularly successful season we had $30 to split between us. We would wade through the water at the edges of the Wembley slough pushing our bicycles, ride the bikes on the ice in the centre to our traps and wade back to shore. I vividly recall one day when a strong, warm Chinook was blowing as we waded to the ice and as we rode on the middle the ice disintegrated. While pushing the bike to shore my feet slipped and I fell with the bike on top of me. We were both soaked from the neck down and with the strong wind it now seems a wonder we survived the cold. I remember Doug crawled into a culvert to seek shelter from the wind. I do believe if his older brother, Harry, had not come looking for us we may have perished.

As a teenager, with other friends such as Kermit Kruso, Bob Whenham, Kay Trelle, my time was occupied with other activities and interests, among them, girls. My first "steady" was Betty Rigby, who was attending school in Wembley. We were married in 1946 and 34 years later we are still going together.

My family moved to Wembley in 1929 when my father had purchsed the Bromley Hardware store. I remember living in a coal shed and tent the first summer, while waiting for the Bromley house to become vacant.

I started school in 1931 in the "new" two-room school, just built, but later was registered in the "old" one-room school (which was subsequently sold to R. Kranz for a warehouse). This school was heated with a huge pot-bellied heater at the rear and I still remember vividly Ben Austin, the janitor, who always felt it necessary to fuel up the stove shortly after classes started, much to the annoyance of Miss Wilson.

During the early part of World War II, I, along with many other high school students, helped with the harvest. All the farmers of that time must remember 1941 when it rained for six weeks and much of the crop remained out that winter. We threshed the Rigby north quarter with rubber boots on, the bottom of the stooks standing in water. I remember Mr. W. Rigby operating a power binder pulled by a tractor driven by daughter-in-law, Eva and son, Justyn, driving three horses hooked to the tractor. I was the stooker and it was snowing so hard that I missed a whole row of bundles.

During those years I learned to enjoy goose hunting and at that time the South Peace was a hunter's paradise. It is a sport that I have not indulged in for many years.

During the late 1930's I was very fortunate to take a trip to the long-dreamed of outlet to the coast, the Monkman Pass. Noel MacLean, Ted Chambers, Bob Newcom and my father were indulgent enough to take this kid along. It was raining when we left and raining when we returned. We pushed and pulled the Newcom truck, felled trees for corduroy, made makeshift "come-a-longs" with chains and logs for many miles, before abandoning the vehicle and walking to Kinuso Falls. A very memorable but exhausting trip. I never quite forgave my mother who insisted, on my returning home, that I take a bath before falling into bed exhausted.

After a brief service in the R.C.A.F. I joined my father in the business. It was during the "temporary" illness of my father that I learned about hard work. Because it was thought he would recover his health, no extra help was hired. That summer I got up early to set up machinery for a few hours before going to the store for regular business hours and doing books in the evenings.

It was during a term on the village council when I held the office of mayor that Queen Elizabeth II was crowned. There was an exchange of letters between Wembley, Alberta, and Wembley, England, (after which the former was named). I was surprised to receive shortly after, a quarter-page newspaper article with an actual photostat of my letter to the people of Wembley, England. I still have it among my souveniers.

My father died in 1955 and in 1957 I bought out my brother, Tom's share of the business. A small grocery line was added, and in 1959 I started work as a District Manager for Massey-Ferguson Ltd. In the early 1960's we started a farming operation at Halcourt. Although I did not get to the farm as often as I would have liked, I managed to help Bryce Campbell, the farm foreman, a little in the busy season.

In 1966 I moved to Victoria, with my wife and children, Greg, Rhonda, and Rosalyn, all of whom are successfully on their own and still residing in Victoria.

Incidentally, Henry Rollin gave me my first haircut in Wembley by placing me on a box in the barber's chair. Fifty years later he is still cutting it, only in Victoria, and without the box! Was it really that long ago?



John, Betty, Rosalyn, Rhonda and Greg Bunyan.

Reginald A. Bunyan and Family

Reg was born in 1897 in Northampton, England. He left with his parents for Canada in 1903 with the Barr Colonists. They settled in Lloydminister where Reg got his education and learned the hardware business. He enlisted in the 188th Battalion in 1915 and was discharged in 1917 with war disability.

After his discharge he worked in a hardware store in Fort Saskatchewan where he met his future wife, Jean McClellan, who was teaching there. She came from Belfast, North Ireland with her parents in 1906. They were later married and moved to Waskatenau starting in business there as Bunyan and Boyd. Later he decided to try it alone in Wembley, a new town the end of the steel. He bought a hardware and implement business from Bert

Bromley in 1929. Mr. Elliott later joined him and they operated Wembley and Hythe hardware stores. Their letterheads had the caption "Wembley, the town that made Peace River famous."

At this time the Monkman Pass came to the front as the country was looking for a western outlet to the Coast. Reg and Bob Kranz were quoted in the Edmonton Journal as two prominent merchants in Wembley who were strong boosters for it.

Reg now decided to branch out farther and, with Cecil Young, opened up the South Wapiti Lumber Mill on Bald Hill. They later sold the mill to Gordon Wilson, who a year later sold to Anderson Brothers who eventually opened up a planing mill in Wembley.

Reg took a keen interest in the local government, acting as Councillor for many years and later Mayor. He was an avid reader and his collection of a thousand books or more were given to Wembley School Library. He also took a keen interest in boy's sports and managed both junior hockey and softball teams. He enjoyed curling, hunting, gardening and especially photography. He was a member of both Forester and Oddfellow Lodges.

Jean will also be remembered for her activity in Church, school and music in the community.

There were three children born to them, John, a realator in Victoria; Marian (Mrs. John Neubauer) in Tomslake noted for her music and now instructing in Northern Lights College, Dawson Creek; and Tom a geomagnetist at Pacific Geoscience Centre, Victoria, B.C. There are 12 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



Tom, John, Jean, Marian, Reg Bunyan family.

Reg passed away in 1955, and John and Tom, who had both been taken into partnership, carried on for a few years. Tom decided to go to the Geomagnetic Observatory in Athabasca.

John sold the store in 1966 and moved to Victoria where the family still lives.

Jean has gone to Victoria for the winter for many years and four years ago married Floyd VanSchaick. They still winter in Victoria.

Two interesting happenings that took place in our time - We had a hard-hearted bank manager who foreclosed if payments were not made on the day they matured. One day a line up of wagons filled with grain were waiting to be dumped when the elevator closed for the night. This farmer went to the bank manager and explained his position but the answer was "It's due today or else." The farmer went back, took his wagon out of the line up and that evening shovelled the grain into the bank through a window.

One day a well known and respected man, Bill Palmer, came into the hardware very depressed. Reg asked what was wrong. Bill said he had just lost $500. He had put it in his pants pocket underneath his overalls and it was gone now. Reg went back and brought his $500 but Bill said, "No, you can't do that." Reg said, "I walked behind you on the way home from the Curling Rink and the money kept dropping with each step." Needless to say both men were delighted. Bill to get his money and Reg to restore it to its rightful owner.



Reg and Jean Bunyan.

The Mac Cameron Family

Malcolm "Mac" Cameron was born in Lakeview, Quebec, in 1898 and arrived in the Peace River Country over the Edson Trail in 1914 with his parents, Donald and Catherine Cameron. He homesteaded two miles north of Wembley and later married Elizabeth Parry. Elizabeth was born in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, in 1910, and moved with her family to the Wembley-Lake Saskatoon district. She was an active member of the Lake Saskatoon Community Club, a member of the Wembley United Church and W.A. of the church. She was also on the executive of the Wembley Home and School Association. Elizabeth passed away in October of 1953.

Mac continued farming until 1966, selling his land to Robert Coe (who still farms it), and retired to live in Wembley. In 1971 he was hospitalized and the same year moved to Swan Haven Nursing home where he passed away in June of 1972.

Four children were born to Mac and Elizabeth.

Ethel married Frank Hockey and lives in Grande Prairie. Ethel works as a ward clerk at the hospital, Frank is manager of Bighorn Realty. They have three children; Gayle, Robert, and Sharon.

Donald married Elsie Gross of Manitoba and they live in St. Albert where Donald has worked for Geolograph. They have two boys, Darrell, and Dail.

Gerald married Ina Taylor and they live in Wembley where Gerald is manager of the Wembley Co-op Seed Plant. They have four children, Greg, Dennis, Muriel and Faye.

Louella married Donald Watson. They have three children, Brent, Elaine and Brenda. Donald is presently the postmaster in Wembley where they make their home.

Peter Cameron

I came to Lake Saskatoon in 1914 with my mother and dad, Donald and Catherine Cameron, brother Malcolm, and sister Elizabeth. We came over the Edson Trail in two wagons pulled by four horses. The rabbits were very thick that year.

Dad homesteaded SE 33-71-8-W6. He died in 1921, and I took over the farm.

In December 1933, Kathleen English and I were married. We had one boy Bobby who works for construction outfits in B.C. and the Yukon.

Kathleen passed away in July 1944.

I continued to farm until buying the Leo Cook house in Wembley in 1967 and moving to town, where I still live, going out to help nephew Jerry with the farming in the spring and fall.



Kathleen Cameron, Grannie Watson, Louella Cameron all June 21 birthdays. About 1942.

John Kennedy Campbell

I was born in 1897 in Ballymony, Ireland. Leaving my wife, Annie (nee Murphy), and baby son behind, I came to Canada in the early spring of 1922.

Traveling westward from St. John's (where I docked) I spent one year working on farms in Saskatchewan. While there I heard of work in B.C. I moved to Kimberley where I worked on the construction of a smelter plant.

In late 1922, I was reunited with my wife and son, Bryce, born July 9, 1921. On September 1, 1924, our youngest son William (Billy) was born in Cranbrook, B.C.

While in Kimberley we heard of the "Great Peace River Country", where you could shoot a moose or deer out your back window.

In the early spring of 1926 we moved to Grande Prairie. Later that spring Bill Murphy (brother-in-law) and I purchased the NW 22-72-8-W6, which had been homesteaded by Urie Powell. We lived in a log cabin which was already on the land while we built a frame house.

The boys attended Lake Saskatoon School. In 1943 Bryce and I purchased the Wagar land (W½ 15-72-8-W6). At this time Billy took over the original home quarter. In 1953, Annie and I moved to Wembley where she passed away.

My sons and I continued to farm together until 1955. At this time I married (Ethel Murphy). We janitored the Wembley School till our retirement in 1966.

Bryce and Mary (nee Penney) now live in Wembley. They have three children, Lyle, Sandra, and Colleen. Lyle and Barb have two daughters; Sandra and Cam have two daughters; and Colleen is still at home.

Billy and Georgie (nee Farquhar) still live on the farm. They also have three children, Terrence, Janice, and Karen. Terrence and Myrna have one daughter; Janice and Jim Cramer have two daughters; and Karen married to Bill Kluyt has one son.

In 1978 we moved to Central Park Lodge in Grande Prairie, where we are now residing.

Raymond Currie Campbell

Raymond (Ray), first son born to Finnimore and Bessie (Currie) Campbell, on August 16, 1909 in Sussex, New Brunswick.

In 1920, he moved with his parents, four brothers, and a sister to Glannis, Saskatchewan. The next morning, he looked out of the window and saw the bald prairies. He was very homesick for his green hills, trees, and trout streams of his boyhood days.



Jean, Ray, Cliff and Lawrence Campbell in about 1944.

In 1930, an uncle, Ern Currie, was going to Grande Prairie and asked Ray to accompany him, and Ray has lived here ever since. That fall, he worked on threshing outfits around Dimsdale, Pipestone Creek, and Wembley. It was hard work, but they had fun, too. He worked for Don Noyes of Dimsdale on the farm. Ray filed on a homestead at Millarston - quarter number NW 17-70-8-W6.

Ray and Jean Hines were married in 1932. They had two sons; Clifford Raymond, and Laurence Curtis. The boys attended Millarston school which was also the centre of all the social activities in the district. There also was a good men's softball team.

Ray had a partnership in the Wapiti coal mine. He worked in the mine and also hauled coal to Grande Prairie with his four horse team and sleigh.

They moved to Hazelmere in 1943, and farmed in the summer, and hauled lumber out of the Monkman Pass for Cook Brothers. Then moved to Grande Prairie in the fall of 1948.

Ray and Jean were divorced in 1951.

Son Cliff Campbell now resides in Red Deer, Alberta. Laurence resides at Prince George, B.C.

Ray and Agnes Campbell

by Agnes Campbell

On July 4, 1952, Ray and Agnes (widow of the late Carl Brooks), were married in Wembley United Church. They lived in Wembley for ten years. Agnes' two youngest sons lived with them.

Ray operated the Macobar Drilling Mud business for six years and Agnes kept books.

They fixed up their house, putting in the water and sewer, and Agnes kept boarders. She also taught Sunday School, belonged to the Ladies Aid, Home and School, and the curling club.

Ray became low-boy operator for the County of Grande Prairie and Ray and Agnes moved to Grande Prairie to be nearer his work in 1962. Altogether, he worked for the County for 21 years. He retired in 1976.

In 1958, Ray took Agnes and the boys on their first trip to Vancouver. Ray's father lived there and guided them around beautiful Vancouver.



Ray and Agnes Campbell, July 4, 1952, Wembley, Alberta.

Although the winters are long here, they like this country and are always glad to come home.

Ray belongs to the Lake Saskatoon Masonic Lodge 106, Wapiti Chapter R.A.M. number 34, G.R.A. Grande Prairie. They both belong to the Order of the Eastern Star, Aurora Chapter 46 Grande Prairie.

Agnes' eldest son, Richard Brooks and family reside in Port Colborne, Ontario.

Cecil Brooks, her second son, and family reside in Melville, Saskatchewan.

Dennis Brooks, and Stanley Brooks and family both reside in Fort St. John, B.C.

The Dr. A.M. Carlisle Story

Dr. Carlisle was born in Peterborough, Ontario on March 6, 1896, and got his senior matriculation there, starting medicine in Toronto in September, 1913. In 1915, he joined the second Division of the Canadian Army as a stretcher bearer, spending almost three years at the front in France, returning home, along with some other medical and dental students, to finish their courses in September, 1918.

In 1921, his brother-in-law, Jack Archer of Lake Saskatoon, Alberta, sent an urgent telegram, wanting him to come there as they had no doctor. The only doctor was Dr. L.J. O'Brien, living in Grande Prairie, at that time.

As Dr. Carlisle arrived with only $10 to his name and needed many things (the largest need being a car), his brother, Dave, who lived on the east shore of Lake Saskatoon, mortgaged his farm and lent him enough money to buy a brand new 1921 Model T Ford.

There being no anti-freeze in those days, keeping a car radiator from freezing was a tricky business, so he usually resorted to a cutter and team in the winter and a buggy and team in the spring and fall.

In 1921, dentists were scarce in Canada, so the University gave medical students some instruction on tooth extractions and anaesthesia. He had many calls to the country and the further out the patients were, the less money they had. Dr. Carlisle wrote to the Public Health Department at Edmonton and eventually they payed him $100 a month during the next three years for his work in the three unorganized districts west of Lake Saskatoon. He was the only doctor from there to the B.C. border, a distance of from 45 to 65 miles. He provided the only ambulance as well. Miss Watherston, the district nurse, and the Doctor, on one trip quite a way out, found the bachelor only had eggs for food, so they boiled up one dozen for lunch and had them with a mug of tea, and were very grateful for that.

In the summer of 1921, he met a Toronto University student, Jean McFarlane, of Cutbank Lake Farm, home on her summer holidays. They became engaged the next year and were married in 1923. His office in those days was part of the house and the Doctor's wife had to double as practical nursing assistant, as well as be prepared at a moment's notice to serve sandwiches, cookies and tea to patients who came a long distance and could not even afford the moderate charge in a restaurant.

Dr. Carlisle felt that the early days in the Peace River Country were the hardest for him but the most interesting to look back on.

The Doctor stayed just three and a half years at Lake Saskatoon. At that time, in 1924, the railroad was extended 15 miles west of Grande Prairie and the whole town moved to the railhead, which became the new town of Wembley. Almost all of the buildings were skidded down on logs in the winter of 1924-1925. That year Dr. Carlisle had been accepted as an intern in surgery at the Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto. After that they looked over Ontario for an opening but, encouraged by a warm invitation from the new town of Wembley, they returned west again in April, 1926. The Doctor and Mrs. Carlisle made their home for the next ten years at Wembley, as he felt this was where he was needed the most and where they both had relatives and good friends. Their three children; Jimmy, Mary Jean, and David were born here.

The only hospital being in Grande Prairie, the Doctor made that 15 mile trip nearly everyday and quite often two or three times a day. The family eventually moved to Grande Prairie where they spent their last 21 years of living in the Peace country.

One of the things the Doctor accomplished during his 36 years in the Peace, Art Hosker of Ft. St. John would not be alive today had it not been for the dedication and persistant nature of Dr. Carlisle. As a two and a half year old child, living on a homestead on the banks of the Pipestone Creek near the Wapiti River, Art suffered a ruptured appendix and it was many hours before his parents could get him to the Grande Prairie Hospital. Ruptured appendix in those days, before the advent of antibiotics almost invariably meant death. Somehow, through his unwillingness to surrender anyone to the "Grim Reaper" without a tremendous struggle, Dr. Carlisle pulled Art through, to lead a happy and productive life.

Dr. Carlisle was also coroner in the Peace River for 36 years, until a younger man took over. He had many interesting cases and could tell some grim, but true, murder stories.

Dr. Carlisle left his practice and retired to Victoria, B.C. after practicing in the Peace River country from June 1921 to June 1957. At the age of 75, he returned in August of 1971 to Grande Prairie to sell his Carlisle Building and thus sever ties with the town and district with which he had been associated for so long.

The Dale Chambers Story

Daniel Ward Chambers arrived in the Peace River country, in 1912, via the Edson Trail with his wife Bertha and two children, Ted and Rhea. He took up homesteading in the Two Rivers district, but made Wembley his home for some years. During this time he bought and shipped livestock for an Edmonton based Co-op shipping company and opened a McCormick Deering farm implement shop complemented with a car dealership for Whippet Cars.

Ted worked for Bob Kranz constructing the Flour Mill in the early 1930's. In 1934, at the Anglican Church in Wembley he married Madeline Tyrrell, whose parents, Arthur and Marie Tyrrell, had come to Grande Prairie on the first train, in 1916 (their other daughter, Edna Moon in later years, became matron of the Beaverlodge Hospital).

Rhea married Mac (Noel) McLean who ran the Frontier Lumber Company and in later years she taught school at Lake Saskatoon. Mac built a house which was purchased by the United Grain Growers Company when Rhea and he moved to Grande Prairie. This all ties in with the invisible string that was to later draw Ted's son, Dale Chambers, back to the village of Wembley working at the United Grain Growers elevator. For eight years he worked for United Grain Growers and resided in the house that Mac built.

His wife Dorothy's family also arrived in the country in the early days of Wembley and before. George and Pearl Clarkson, Dorothy's maternal grandparents, with one year old daughter Jean, came to Grande Prairie on the train in 1920 and settled 24 miles west of Beaverlodge, a four day return trip from Wembley. Fred and May McFadzen, Dorothy's paternal grandparents, came to Wembley on a day coach attached to a freight, March 1928, with two sons Ernie, 15 and Vic, 16, on their way to manage the St. James Ranch (better known as the lease) 29 miles west of Beaverlodge.

Vic tells of his first memories of Wembley. Dinty Moore was breaking a horse when their train came in. When they went to get off the coach, Dinty rode the horse right up the steps of the coach. The first time he went into the Chinese Cafe (Happy and Wongs) in came Baldy Red and Wapiti Bill, who stood six feet three, feeling pretty good. Bill kicked the stove pipes down at the chimney hole, just to prove he could. Mrs. Slim Finch, smoked continuously and while she talked, she would pull out the Bull Durham sack, just as unconcerned as could be, dump some on a paper. As she was putting it away with one hand the other hand would roll the cigarette. Vic thought he was in the Wild West for sure. They stayed at Johnsons Boarding house for three weeks.

Jean Clarkson married Vic McFadzen in 1936. Six children were born to them over the years; Dorothy being the second oldest.

Dorothy McFadzen and Dale Chambers were married August 1, 1958.

Dale, Dorothy and two sons, Ken and Jerry moved to Wembley in 1963. Dale managed the United Grain Growers elevator for eight years. (In 1969 Sandy was born and April 1971, Barbara). During this time, he was Village Secretary for a few years and hauled grain. He then took up employment with the Proctor and Gamble pulp mill and still resides in Wembley. This makes us the new generation of old timers of Wembley.

The Horace H. Clarke Family

Mr. Horace H. Clarke came to Wembley on May 31, 1949 from Bezanson where he was the Co-op manager. Having resigned from that position, he came to manage the grocery department for A.W. Mitchell, who owned the Wembley Department Store at that time. In early July he died from a sudden heart attack. His wife, Hilda, and two daughters, Marjorie and Barbara, continued to reside in Wembley. Mrs. Clarke worked at the store from July, 1949 to January, 1971, and in 1972 moved to Beaverlodge where she still resides.

Marjorie is married to Ken Velve of Dawson Creek and they have a girl and a boy.

Barbara is married to Eric Hodges, of the Beaverlodge area, and they have a family of three, a girl and two boys.

Angus Clayton

by Anne Willsey

Angus Clayton, with his wife and two children, moved from Earl Grey, Saskatchewan, to the Peace River country. He worked for several years on the section in the Tupper Area. The family then moved to Wembley where Mrs. Clayton's sister and brother-in-law, the Alec Muirs, were farming, and Angus was once more on the section crew. They finally homesteaded in the Aspen Dale district which is now being farmed by Ed Breitkreutz.

Angus drove a munitions truck during World War I and neighbours always spoke of him driving without lights. The blacker the night, the better. He was a great little dour Scotsman.

Mrs. Clayton had two children by a first marriage - George and Eva. Young George was a truly gifted young man. He could fix anything mechanical, and rigged up many ingenious little inventions to help make work lighter. His saw outfit and wood splitter were used by all



The Clayton family: Eva, Mrs. Clayton, Angus, George and Nellie.

the neighbours. He was the only person with a car or "bug", as he called it made out of parts and bits. His cheerful disposition made him well liked by all.

He moved to Grande Prairie where he was employed as a mechanic. In 1942, he enlisted with the Signal Corps. Prior to going overseas, he married Nellie Childs. He was badly wounded in 1944, and invalided home in 1945.

Angus and his wife continued to farm in the Huallen district even though they no longer had George to help them. Eva in the meantime had taken a hair dressers' course and married Roy Brown of Elmworth. They now reside in Edmonton with their family. Angus and Mrs. Clayton left the farm in later years and retired to Edmonton to be near their daughter.

After George recovered from his war wounds, he resumed work as a mechanic at Windsor Motors for several years. He passed away in 1957. They had two children - George who is married to Debra Greenhaugh and living in Cranbrook, B.C. and Jean married to Floyd Thompson living in Calgary and with three children, Lee, Michael, and John. Nellie has since married Ed Wilburn and is living in Calgary, Alberta.

Harold Coe and the Wembley Dairy

by Ruth Coe

In April, 1944, I bought the dairy from Leith Thornton. He had bought from Finlay Watson, and he and I both used the milk-house attached to the Watson house. (Grannie Watson would sometimes give us a looked-forward-to visit while we did bottles). We had the local blacksmith make us a huge square pan that we could boil the bottles in to sterilize. How we remember the steam and heat of washing milk bottles. We sold about 30 quarts daily, for eight cents and we got two cents subsidy from the government. We were two cents or more cheaper than dairies around but this was during the war and prices were froze on a certain date and Wembley was fortunate to have not had their price raised before it.

We made most of our money by selling half pints of milk to the train for 15 cents. Before I was off the train, often the Newsie would have sold most of it for twice what we got. There were train loads of soldiers going up to work on the Alaska Highway and they seemed hungry for milk.

I started delivering milk with a child's wagon and the cases in it, as the milkmen before had done, then I got a young team and usually had Mr. Vic Elford or someone else drive while I delivered. We recall the day I left the team alone and a young boy on the sidewalk straddled a big dog there and called "Giddee Up," and away went the team around the block. They stopped, straddling the telephone pole. Needless to say, next day we were very short of milk bottles.

We used to drive our cows through town to a pasture down near where the old dump was. Often the wife did this, sometimes with our year old son on the horse with her, especially when I had to go haying, or helped the local farmers with their harvest. Imagine cows travelling your streets twice a day, and not one complaint do we recall from those good folk.

Bob Coe, my brother, bought the dairy from me in 1945 and had it for some years. Then pasteurization became law and Grande Prairie was able to supply it easier and cheaper.



Colin and Ruth Coe while they were in the milk business.

The Charles Conley Family

by Nellie Conley

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Conley were married in June of 1904 at Melfort, Saskatchewan. She was the eldest daughter of J.M. (Silvertip) Campbell, who ran the trading post and traded for fur with the Indians. He was always urging his son-in-law, Charles, to bring his family to the Peace River Country. In 1914, he decided to do so, and with their six children; John, Lawrence, Glen, Jean, Frances, and baby May, the Conleys left Edmonton in July.

They went by train to Athabasca, by stage to Mirror Landing, then down Lesser Slave Lake by boat to



John Malcolm Campbell, with youngest great grandchild, 9 month old, Geraldine Joyce Conley.

Grouard. Here they took the wagons to go by Peace River Crossing, Old Water Hole, Dunvegan, and over the Saddle Hills to Wembley where they settled on a farm, S½-16-71-8-W6, owned by Silvertip. He had a trading post there where he traded with the Indians for fur. The trip took 30 days.

The Conleys resided there seven years. During this time four more children were added to the family; Michael, Evelyn, Gordon, and Betty.

From there they moved to the Fulton place just north and west of present Wembley, SE 21-71-8-W6. Three years later their house was destroyed by fire. After that they moved to Flying Shot, where they owned land, living there until 1924, when they sold to Jimmy James and moved to Grande Prairie.

Mr. and Mrs. Conley and son Gordon all passed away in 1954. John passed away in 1977, Lawrence passed away in 1977, and Frances passed away in 1976.



Mr. and Mrs. Conley.

Ernest Harold (Herb) Cook

Herb Cook was born July 28, 1901, at Monks Morton, Kent, England. He worked for the Canadian Pacific Railroad at Lethbridge, Alberta from 1920 to 1922; the Ottewell Coal Company from 1923 to 1927, and the Lethbridge City Police from January 12, 1928 until joining the Alberta Provincial Police on August 16, 1928. He was with them until the Alberta Provincial Police was absorbed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1932.

Herb was in charge of the Wembley detachment from November 1934 until 1938, being discharged at the expiration of his term of service on March 31, 1938 at Peace River.

After discharge, Herb and his wife, Effie, purchased the Oxley store. Herb joined the army during World War II, and Effie and family remained in Wembley while Herb was away in the army. They later moved to B.C. where Herb passed away.

Effie still lives in Duncan, B.C. They had two children, Bob and Joan when in Wembley, and one son Gary was born after they left here.

Charles Cowpar Family

by Louis Cowpar

My father came to Lake Saskatoon in the summer of 1915, got the position of Hudson's Bay trader and in the summer of 1916, Mother, sister Lillian, brother Joe and I, boarded a wagon and journeyed down from Hay River, Northwest Territories. For the next few years the family stayed at Lake Saskatoon and the family grew. Dad bought a pool room in 1919 and at the same time went to work for Bob Kranz in his store. My sister Anne was born in 1920, Billy in 1925, and Henry was born in 1928.



Four Generations, Left to Right: Louis, Edward, Julia (Louis' Mother), Bradley (Ed's boy).

Rumor abounded at this time, the railroad was heading west again. It had come as far as Grande Prairie in 1916 and the bustling town of Lake Saskatoon was just hoping it would come there. But to everyone's dismay, it went to the newly surveyed townsite of Wembley. A group of persons had been asked to give a name to this new whistle stop and so a name from far away England was chosen. The townsite was purchased from Windy Waddell a hermit who lived on the edge of town in a sod house.

Almost every business moved to the new townsite and with them moved the store of Bob Kranz. They had a real unique way of building the basement in the rock hard



Charlie Cowpar.

gumbo of the town. Holes were drilled, dynamite lowered down into them and the resulting gaps were squared off and served as a perfect basement.

It was in Wembley that Dad became the district police magistrate. He held this position until his death in 1947. Lillian married Jim Kimberly and died in childbirth in 1921.

In the winter of 1933 I broke my leg playing hockey and for 14 months I lived at the Grande Prairie Hospital under the care of Dr. O'Brien. When I was released from the hospital I travelled north into Saskatchewan to visit mother's relatives at the Ile LaCrosse and recuperated. On arrival back home at Wembley I attended the Wembley Sports Day and it was at this dance I met my wife-to-be, Ella Dombrova.

After a whirlwind courtship we were wed, October 15, 1937. I went to work for the South Wapiti Lumber Company and in the next few years, our family grew. Edward Charles was born in 1938, Herbert Louis in 1941, and Kenneth Frank in 1943.

Brother Billy enlisted in the Army in 1943 but never left Canada. Sister Anne also enlisted and spent time overseas. The end of the war saw many changes. Billy went to Queen Charlotte Island, married Lou Lightfoot and raised seven children. Anne met and wed Walter Pushkarenko and settled in Vernon, B.C. raising four children. Henry married Velda Whitford and resides in Fort St. John, B.C.

After the birth of our children, Ella cooked in the Wembley Cafe and worked odd jobs in the Purves Hotel. During her years at the cafe she worked for various persons, Happy the Chinaman, Chrissy Bradley, Lilly Schneider, Jack Bliss, Fern Carson and Clarence Grubb. It was when she worked for Clarence Grubb that Wembley had a large fire. Many businesses were burnt down including Tom Yakimchuk's store, the pool hall, that was in the old Bank of Commerce building and a cafe that was in Archer's old law office.

Tragedy struck our family in the sudden death of our brother Joe, killed by a falling tree, in the fall of 1952.

In the fall of 1956, I came to work for North Canadian Forest Industries and was joined by Ella and the boys in April of 1957. My brother-in-law, Doug Tetreau started building our present home in 1957.

On August 2, 1960 I had the misfortune to break my leg again and had to attend my son Ed's marriage to Irene Meyer on October 27, on crutches. Edward now resides in Dawson Creek, B.C. with his wife, and son, Bradley, who was born August 11, 1964.

Ken married Gail Peebles on August 3, 1968 and had a daughter, Sandra Lynn, August 18, 1972 and a son, Cameron Neil, April 15, 1976. He is presently employed at Proctor and Gamble Cellulose in Grande Prairie.

Herb, still unmarried, resides in Grande Prairie and is employed in the drywall business.

Mother passed away at the Grande Prairie Hospital in the summer of 1970 after a lengthy illness.

I retired in the summer of 1978 and keep active with my trips to relatives and the fall hunting season.



Louis and Ella Cowpar.

William Craig

William Craig was born in Karcardine Shire Scotland on September 9, 1878. He worked on the family croft then was employed for several years in a distillery in Glasgow before emigrating to Canada in 1908 with his two brothers, Alex and Dave.

Bill walked into the Peace River country by the Lesser Slave Lake - Grouard trail in 1910 and filed on the SW 24-71-8-W6 east of present day Wembley village. In order to establish his farm he worked for some time in Calgary with a crew digging water lines. Later he worked out of Edmonton for the Grand Trunk Railway in constructing telegraph lines.

Bill was an efficient farmer who worked closely with the Beaverlodge Experimental Farm. He raised registered Shorthorn cattle and Clydesdale horses importing a registered Clydesdale stallion from Scotland. Bill was one of the original members of the "Big Seven" steam threshing outfit which harvested crops throughout the area. He was involved with local fair boards in both Wembley and Grande Prairie and on one occasion won a farm award.

Bill enjoyed music, was an excellent violinist; he also had the first radio in the area.

He used to tell of the time he broke 15 to 20 acres of land for Silvertip Campbell, with a team of oxen, and



Mr. and Mrs. Bill Craig on their farm east of Wembley.

how the oxen swung into the bush on every round, plow and all, to rid themselves of flies and mosquitoes by rubbing past the trees.

Bill also had a rifle range, and won shooting awards many times.

Bill was a respected member of the community and was well known for his sense of humor. In 1932 he married Elizabeth Taylor, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Taylor of Wembley. In 1944 they sold their farm to Mr. George Jordon and took up residence in Wembley.

Bill passed away on November 21, 1973 and Elizabeth on December 23, 1973.

Peter Wallace Cranston

by Mary Cranston

Peter was born at Kelvin, Ontario March 3, 1910. With his parents, sister, brother, grandmother Braybrooke, and Uncle Will, they came to Edson by rail in May 1911. The women and children lived in a tent that summer. His father who owned a team of white oxen, and Uncle Will helped to blaze the Edson Trail.

The family left Edson with all their "effects" in September, coming over the newly built Edson Trail, fording the Smoky River, and arrived at Mac Millers at Beaverlodge in November 1911.

Peter grew up on the farm at Hermit Lake venturing on his own in April 1939 when he purchased the east half of section 23-71-8-W6 in the Wembley district. Here he started farming with horses and raising hogs. He batched for five years.

I was born on a homestead near Hopkins, Alberta. My father, Bazyl Povaschuk, was born in Austria in 1883. Losing both of his parents at a very young age, he was adopted by his aunt, but living conditions were so poor that the Bishop of his church advised him to come to Canada. He arrived in Edmonton in 1905 and filed on a homestead in Northern Valley district in 1907. Here he built a cabin with a sod roof which later became our home for several years.

My mother, Anna Farina, born in 1886, came to Canada with her parents from the Ukraine in 1906. They stayed in Manitoba for two years, then came to Alberta via Vermilion and settled on a homestead in the Primula area.

My parents raised a family of three children; Michael, married a Toronto girl, Helen Phelan, and are now living in Scarborough, Ontario. They have no family. John, married Verdella Robinson from Clarksburg, Ontario. They are now retired from farming and live at Elk Point. They have a family of three boys.

In the spring of 1935, my family moved to Elk Point District settling on the Court Smith farm which my father had bought the previous year.

In the spring of 1943, I ventured out to a large ranch at Endiang, Alberta. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hunt were a wonderful couple to work with. I say this because they treated me like one of the family. Here too, I enjoyed horseback riding and the numerous tasks on this ranch.

When I met Peter in Edmonton in November 1943, I knew my stay at Endiang would be brief. I fell in love with a man who loved the beautiful Peace River country. We were married at Elk Point on April 12, 1944. I have no regrets.



April 12, 1944. Peter and Mary Cranston on their Wedding Day, before they got away.

Coming to Grande Prairie, we were greeted by the family, whisked into the car, and driven to the family home at Hermit Lake where the neighbours gathered that evening on the occasion of Mr. and Mrs. George Cranstons 40th wedding anniversary, and the surprise marriage of Peter and Mary!

Two weeks later, a shower was held at Elmer Gillespie's home for us, another warm welcome shown by the community.

From this marriage, two daughters were born; Mary Jean on September 1945, and Gloria Ann in August 1947.

The summer of 1951 brought power to the farm, electricity first to the house and later to the other buildings. This was also the year that Mother and Dad Cranston, wishing for that country living again, moved a house on our farm and settled in by fall. They lived here on their "lot" enjoying country life, gardening, growing beautiful raspberries and flowers. When Dad no longer enjoyed driving on his own in the winter, they moved back to Grande Prairie in April 1959, renting out their house to Mr. and Mrs. William Van Straaten. The house was sold and moved away in April 1960. We missed their cheerful willing ways of help and advice which will always be remembered.



George Cranston, William Runka, Alice Cranston, Gloria, Peter, Mary and Jean Cranston.

The girls graduated from Wembley High School, and also received their confirmation from the Wembley United Church. Under the leadership of Joan MacAlister and Evelyn Sebastian, both girls were in 4-H Clothing Club for three years.

In October 1965, Jean and Tommy Finch were married in the Wembley United Church taking up residence in Grande Prairie, and later moving to Flying Shot.

Gloria persued her studies, taking first year of University at the Grande Prairie College, followed by three years of University of Alberta in Edmonton, graduating in April of 1970.

After graduating from the University of Alberta with an Education degree in Secondary English, Gloria and Carol Wilson spent two very interesting months hitchhiking through England and Europe. They tried to see as many historic sites as possible. The hospitality of the European people was remarkable.

Gloria began her first year of teaching in junior high at Consort, Alberta. She spent that summer vacation boning up on French in St. Pierre and Miquelon in preparation for a new job in Hinton. She taught two years here before giving away all her worldly possessions (except her MG) and setting out on a trip of undetermined length. The trip began in London, and was to last nearly two years.

I was always kept busy on the farm taking time to be involved in Wembley United Church Women, serving in various capacity. One I enjoyed most was on the Bazaar committee with Mrs. C. Penny and Connie Stephens.

A member of Alberta Wheat Pool, Local Co-ops, Unifarm, and Rape Growers Association, Peter in his usual quiet and pleasant manner, continued farming until his sudden death on May 8, 1972.

I remained with the farm selling out in 1973. Semi retiring to Grande Prairie that fall, I worked as Day Care cook working only four hours a day. In the summer of 1974, I accepted part time employment as clerk cashier at the Grande Prairie Co-op Store which I enjoyed for over the four years.

The Tommy Finch family moved to South Wapiti on their farm in 1971. They sold out in 1974 and moved to Grovedale. Jean and Tom have four children; Rose-Marie, Allan, Bonnie, and Erin.

Gloria married Douglas Moore July 4, 1975 in New Plymouth, New Zealand. They returned to Grande Prairie July 15, after a brief stay, took up residence and teaching in Hinton.

The Cutler Family

Ivor was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, son of Frank and Margaret Cutler. Ivor moved with his parents to Edmonton for a time before striking out on his own in the Peace River Country in 1945.

Helen was born in Broadview, Saskatchewan, daughter of John and Helen Haglund. As a young child, she moved with the family to a farm at Elmworth.

Ivor and Helen were married in June 1946 and were blessed with three children, a son and two daughters. Roy, Sharon, and Lynda. Roy took a keen interest in sports, and as a result, won the Alberta Golden Gloves in Edmonton in 1963. Roy is presently working in Fort McMurray.



Helen and Ivor Cutler and their family, Roy, Sharon and Lynda.

Sharon married Arnold Miller and they live in Grande Prairie. They have two children, Wendy and Clinton.

Lynda married Ervin Miller. Lynda and Ervin had two daughters, Shelly and Tammy. They live on an acreage just out of Grande Prairie, where they keep a few ponies and enjoy country living.

The George Davis Family

by Nancy (Wills) Davis

My family, the Wills, came to Wembley in 1926. We arrived from England in August of that year. Mother, Father, and nine children spent the first night in a little hotel. Wembley was a thriving little town as it was "end of steel" at that time. We were moved onto a farm three miles out of town and made the acquaintance of our neighbour children, Agnes, Dick, and Alice Smith, whom we never forgot. We did not stay long at the farm as my parents had friends from the "old country" living at Goodfare, so we went to Goodfare and my father homesteaded in that area. Since my father had been a sailor in the Royal Navy, this was quite a change for him, and us.

Our arrival in Wembley caused quite a stir and people gathered around us mostly to hear us talk. Those first few weeks in Wembley were very exciting to we "city children". We went to town to church with the Smiths, in a democrat which was a very novel way of travel for us, and hunting eggs was a marvelous pastime. I remember Mother going to a sale and buying things we badly needed, and paying prices that were much more than she should have, comparing the English shilling to the Canadian dollar, thinking all the while she was getting a bargain.

We met many interesting people in those early days, Dr. Carlisle, Lawyer Simmons, the Watsons, and many others about whom one could fill a book with tales of the old west.

I remember one young man in particular who offered us ice cream cones which we children refused as he was a "stranger". To this day I am offered an ice cream cone by that same man whenever we meet which causes us a great deal of laughter and "remember when". I did not see much of Wembley for the next 24 years, until my husband, George, and I returned here to live in 1950. Our three children, Sheila, Dorothy, and Jeff, grew up in the town. We started a shoe repair shop in July of that year, in a little store on main street. We were caught in the fire which swept the west side of main street in September of that year. The town gave us a house to live in which we afterward bought and still live in.

Les and Clara Davey

Les Davey was born in Balcarres, Saskatchewan. He joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1929. Les was moved to Wembley early in 1938 from Kinuso, taking over from Herb Cook.

We recall the Bunyans, the Neilsons, Kranz store, Dr. Miller, and many more of the friendly people who lived in the village. It was a nice place to live and a beautiful country, but unfortunately, progress was hindered because of Grande Prairie and Beaverlodge's more favourable growth.

One significant event while we were there was the declaration of World War Two, which seemed very far away from us at the time, but we listened faithfully to all radio accounts. I do remember one project "the Monkman Pass", which got nowhere.

Les was transferred to Peace River in 1940 when Wembley detachment was closed and re-opened in Beaverlodge. We moveed to McLennan in 1941 where we stayed for five years. In 1942, we lost little Dickie at the age of four and a half when he was undergoing eye surgery in Toronto.

Our next move was to the Calgary area, Crossfield, Calgary, and Olds for three years. Les 'retired' from Olds in 1949. Then he was employed at Alberta Distilliers in Calgary for two years, then two years in Hamilton, Ontario, with a construction company. He came back to Alberta in 1954 with the Provincial Government (weigh scales) until his retirement at the age of 65.

We moved to B.C. for about a year and a half, and in 1976, we came east to Burlington, Ontario. Our daughter Janice lives here, and Eleanor, born at McLennan, is living in Edmonton, where we are seriously considering going back to. We are like gypsies trying to find the right place.

The Elmer Dodds Family

The Dodds family lived in Wembley only four short years, but enjoyed that period of their lives very much, making many friends that turned into lasting friendships.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Dodds and family of three girls, Phyllis, Joyce and Shirley, moved from Hardisty, Alberta, in January, 1944. Mr. Dodds worked for the Northern Alberta Railways and the terminal was at Wembley at that time.

Mrs. Dodds was a member of the United Church Women as well as being an Explorer leader for two years. The three girls were in the Church Choir and Mrs. Bu-



Phyllis, Joyce and Shirley Dodds and doll at Wembley.

nyan was the capable leader. Reverend Harry Whaley was the minister at that time. Mrs. Whaley was very active in all church work. Reverend Whaley performed the marriage of Phyllis and Bert Young; eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Young of Wembley, January 10, 1947.

In May, 1945 Mr. and Mrs. Dodds took over the Wembley Cafe. They were only there three months when Mrs. Dodds became ill and they had to give it up. Mary Gerkowski was the main cook and Georgina Farquhar was helping to serve. Many good visits over a cup of coffee were had there.

Phyllis, Joyce and Shirley attended Wembley School. Some of the teachers were Miss Ballentyne, Mrs. Robertson and Mr. Rigby.

April of 1948 saw the family move to Fort McMurray where Mr. Dodds was transferred by the Northern Alberta Railways. August 23, 1949, Douglas was born to make their family complete and carry on the family name.



Mr. and Mrs. E. Dodds at Wembley.

The Nick Dzaman Family

Nick and Kathleen Dzaman moved to Wembley in the spring of 1936, coming from High Prairie, Alberta. They had four children then, and one was to be born later on.

Nick had a brother Bill living in Wembley, so his family was able to stay in his home when they first arrived until a home was built on the west end of town.

Being a mechanic, he bought a machine shed downtown which he used as his garage until it and several other business places were destroyed by a fire in 1950. It was quickly replaced with the help of local boys.

Failing eyesight resulted in selling out and retirement. Kathleen suffered from arthritis, and was in and out of the hospital for several years. In 1965, she went in to stay until her death in 1974. Nick is in a nursing home at Stettler.

A son Kenneth passed away in 1957 while with the army in Germany. Margaret, the youngest, is married to Dennis Westad. They have twin sons, Derek and David, and a daughter Kimberly; they live in Quesnel, B.C. Betty is married to Wolfgang Rautenstrauch. They have two sons, Darcy and Larry, all living in Grande Prairie.

Eileen is married to George Patterson. Their home is at Stettler. Doreen is married to Cliff Purves and living in Ponoka. They have two sons; Gary at Beaverlodge, and Greg at Bonnyville, and a daughter Colleen at Ponoka. Greg and wife Lee have one son. Colleen and husband, Tom Griffith, have one son.

The Eckstrom Family

by Stan Eckstrom

My parents came from Sweden at the turn of the century and settled in the Willow Creek-Calmar area. It was there I was born and received my education and spent the earlier years of my life.

The lure of the north was in my blood and in August of 1938 I flew into Fort Resolution to work in the lumber industry. Staying there a year, I then came back to Willow Creek and farmed.

During 1942, I was in Fort Smith, at which time the Canol Project was underway, and I was in the employment of Bechtel-Price-Callenhan for more than two years. I worked on what is now the famous Alaska Highway.

In the fall of 1944, I came to Wembley with Jack Radford, Rudolph Sohn, Clarence Johnson, and Alex Howden. It was then that South Wapiti Lumber Company was founded, and Stan's Sawmill Ltd. was formed into a company and contracted sawing during that time.

The South Wapiti Lumber Company was sold to Anderson Brothers of Beaverlodge in the fall of 1946. It was during this period that I met Reta Edgerton whose parentage goes back to 1909 and early settlers into the Beaverlodge area.

Before I met Reta she had taken a hairdressing course in Edmonton where she received a hairdressing diploma. Following this she went to Leduc where she opened her first of two beauty parlors. Two years later she sold her beauty parlor, and hearing of a boom in Dawson Creek, travelled there and opened her second successful beauty parlor.

We were married in 1947, October 29. Over the period of years we were blessed with eight wonderful children, four daughters and four sons.

Of the four daughters Sharon, the oldest, married Bill Hurley and lives on the farm seven miles west of Beaverlodge. Sharon and Bill have five children, Dwayne, Dwight, Darlene, Darrel, and Darla.



Christmas dinner at the Eckstroms.

Carmen married Gerry Lemire and they live in Winnipeg where he is manager of the Service Department with Lennox Heating and Refrigeration Ltd. of Canada. Carmen and Garry have two children, Bradley and Michelle.

At the present time Carla and Charlene are attending college at the Grande Prairie Regional College. Carla is presently taking her Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Political Science. Carla took a year off from college and worked for a year, so she could go travelling. In November of 1978 she flew to London and then to Las Palmas where she planned on wintering in the Canary Islands. Due to ill health she had to return home and cut her vacation short. Two months later, she was travelling again, this time to Mexico.

Charlene is taking her Bachelor of Science degree, her major uncertain. Both girls are planning to attend the University of Alberta in Edmonton this fall, 1980.

Darwin is in his second year as Principal at Teepee Creek. Previous to this he taught school for two years at Sexsmith and was very active in the Physical Education department. Prior to teaching, Darwin received his degree from the University of Alberta. After his two years in Sexsmith, he attended the University of Amsterdam with courses contributing towards his masters degree. While there, he travelled extensively throughout Europe. When the winter games were finally awarded to Grande Prairie Darwin volunteered to become chairman of weight lifting. There wasn't enough interest in this activity so he became chairman of the wrestling. Many hours of work and planning went into this project and in the end it was a very rewarding experience.

Darren, at the age of 14, joined Air Cadets and was on the drill team that won the Provincial Competition two years in succession, this won him his Flying Scholarship and his Private Pilot License, which he still retains. He also acquired his Bachelor of Education degree at the University of Alberta, his major being social studies. Darren, who started the travelling trend in the family, has been to every continent in the world except South America. In the summer of 1973 he flew to London and started his year long excursion of Europe. Five years later the urge to travel still in his blood, he set out for areas in the world he had not yet seen. He left Edmonton for Fiji, went on to Australia where he travelled over land throughout Asia and parts of Africa. Eight months after his voyage started, he returned home. Darren is presently employed as a teacher at Sexsmith Junior High School.

Shawn and Lorne are still at home and attending school. Shawn is in grade eight and Lorne is in nine.



Spring of 1954, Darwin, Sharon, Grandma Eckstrom holding Darren, Carmen with doll.

For the past five years I have been and still am employed by the Federal Government at Canadian Forces Station, Beaverlodge. We make our home in Wembley at the present time.

Over the past years we have seen a great many changes in the community. As the children grew and left home, so too has the hamlet grown from a small local community to a rapidly expanding village.

The Wallace Edgar Family

by Mabel Edgar

My father, John Maguire, was born at Bowmanville, Ontario of Irish descent, (from Dublin). My mother, Mathilda Paisley, was of Scotch descent (the family tree dates back to Sir Walter Scott), born at Smith's Falls, Ontario. Both families moved to Howich. My dad, being a blacksmith by trade, soon took over the farm from his father.

We were of a large family of 11, my mother having more children than all her grandchildren put together, and all but one made it over 70 years. All our family were known to be good in school. We went to Number 18 school, one half mile from our new buildings.



Wallace and Mabel Edgar.

Later in life, I taught school at Number 18 School for a month, substituting at both Number 18 and Number 10, different times. I should have been a school teacher or a nurse. My dad and the inspector wanted me to, but my mother said no. I have many times wished I had been. Such is life!

Again, I should have gone into music, but did not take many lessons. It has fallen to me to be organist many times during my career, starting in Sunday School when called upon. Later, I was in the church choir, and the organist being a school teacher, I filled in for her at Easter, summer holidays, and Christmas. I then took over for six years. The hymns were easy, but the anthems worried me. I was a Presbyterian, and our congregation of 50 families always gave me a gift of $25 for Christmas.

After coming to Wembley in 1926, I played the organ at the United Church for ten years straight and was given a thank you gift, a much appreciated silver basket filled with mums. I subbed there many times, off and on, as organist, also helping out at Beaverlodge and Rycroft. I always took quite an interest in church work, being secretary-treasurer of the Ladies Aid, W.M.S. and United Church Women as changes took place; also secretary-treasurer of the Wembley United Church, at that time for the whole charge of five appointments. I was also secretary-treasurer for our badminton club, Red Cross, S.T.O., and Women's Institute.



Agnes Taylor, Mrs. Edgar, Roger, and Wallace, about 1930.

As for sports, I was fond of most all sports, baseball, curling, badminton, golf, whist, court whist, five hundred, bridge, and dancing.

My husband (to be) Wallace, lived about three miles from us in Ontario. His parents, both of Scottish descent, were from quite a big clan and held a reunion each year. Before we were married, I was invited to these. The family were all strong Liberals, and all strong church workers in the Presbyterian Church. My father was a strong Conservative.

Wallace came west to homestead in 1912. In 1915, his father passed away and Wallace went home. On March 14, 1917, we were married. He then came out west early in 1918 to fix up the shack. He had it real nice for my arrival in July. By this time we had a little girl.

August 26, 1926, Wallace came to Wembley to run the United Grain Growers elevator. Later he wanted to get an elevator with an electric lift, so he spent a year at Rycroft, moving then to Beaverlodge where he finished up his 20 years with the company. By this time, he was selling cars for Hudson Essex. He won a prize for best salesman of the year. This company went broke. He then sold for others in Grande Prairie.

Having the first combine at the farm, he did a lot of combine work for others, mostly brome and fescue.

Wallace did all sorts of jobs. For two winters, he took out lumber at the Haakstad mill, hauling most of it to Clairmont. He belonged to the Big Eight steam threshing outfit. He also moved a few buildings later on. He then sold the farm, three quarters to C.R. White and George Cleve.

Wallace was a good mixer, fond of dancing, curling, and baseball. He was president of the Wembley rodeo one year and enjoyed most sports.

It was March 14, 1967 we celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary. As Wallace said, "starting on the next 50".

However, life was not just a pleasure at all times, we lost two little girls, Irene in 1919, and Eileen in 1929.

For the last eight years, we spent quite a quiet life, living in our home in Wembley.

Roger, our son, 50 years to the day younger than I am, a fine young man, has a business in Lac La Biche.

Wallace passed away August 8, 1975 in his 87 year. I am now 92 years old, the last of our family.

I received a diploma for standard leadership in the United Church. During the time Reverend Swallow was our minister, I was presented with a plaque for "efficient services for the Wembley United Church" which I much prize. I also received a single rose on mother's day. Reverend Swallow called it "Mrs. Edgar's Mothers Day".

James Elliott

Jim Elliott came to Wembley in 1930, and in 1932 formed a partnership with Reg Bunyan in the hardware business. They bought the Hythe Hardware store and operated both stores. A few years later, they dissolved partnership, Jim taking over the Hythe store and Reg Bunyan keeping the Wembley business.

Jim operated this store for some years but was terribly troubled with arthritis and finally sold out to McLeod and Inkster.

Mr. Elliott moved to Vancouver where he lived until he passed away in 1975.

The Farquhar Family

by Betty Kuntz

George and Molly Farquhar and four daughters came to Canada in June, 1927, from Elgin, Murrayshire, Scotland. They sailed from Queen's dock in Glasgow to Quebec, then came by train to Edmonton, and on to Wembley.

They took up farming three and a half miles southwest of Wembley. Mom recalls the train ride as being very rough - and the roads were just dirt trails. Their house was just being built so they had to live in a house on the neighbouring farm for the first four months.

Shortly after they arrived, Dad found it necessary to go out to work leaving Mom at home with the children and a cow to milk. She had never milked a cow before but it didn't take her long to learn. Those first years were very hard and Mom recalls thinking "If I could walk back to Scotland, I would". However, things improved and they began to feel quite at home here.

Four more children were born - two daughters and two sons. The children attended school in Wembley and also church services where Reverend Simons was our first minister. Our closest neighbours were the Frank Johns, Henry Taylors, and Alex Thomsons. Many good times were had visiting together.



Mr. Farquhar and Mr. Taylor stacking hay.

Cold winter evenings were spent around the fire watching Mom knit or sew, listening to the gramaphone or to Dad singing the old Scottish songs.

Dad passed away on April 29, 1941. The farm was sold and we moved into Wembley where Mom still resides.

The family all live in and around the district - Margaret (Mrs. Leland Campbell) Wembley, Molly (Mrs. Ralph Hosker) Beaverlodge, Jessie (Mrs. Paul Kushnerik) Edmonton who passed away May 16, 1979, Kathie (Mrs. Don Murphy) Wembley, Georgina (Mrs. Bill Campbell) Wembley, Betty (Mrs. Paul Kuntz) Grovedale, son Jimmy (who married Eleanor Obst) Wembley, and Bill (who married Janet Tissington) Dawson Creek, B.C., Mom has 34 grandchildren and 38 great grandchildren.

Emma and William Feist and Family

by Doreen E. Riggs

William Feist (Bill) was born at Hastings, England in 1888. Emma was born at London, England in 1892. They were married in 1914 and left immediately for Ontario, Canada.

Mom and Dad moved to Alberta to the Nanton area on the Harvesters' Special in the fall of 1914. Dad worked on ranches in that area until 1920 when he started buying grain for the Western Canada Flour Mills Company. He remained there until 1927.

In 1927, he joined the newly formed Alberta Wheat Pool Company and was assigned to Wembley as their first grain buyer for the district.

We arrived in Wembley in July of 1927. The elevator was still under construction and a house had not yet been purchased for us. We lived in a small two-roomed shack until the company bought the house across from the United Church.

At this time, Wembley was the end of the steel, so grain was hauled from as far away as Halcourt, Rio Grande, and Pouce Coupe. Dad bought grain at the Wembley elevator until 1953 when he retired at the age of 65.

Dad recalls Wembley of 1927 as a town with graded dirt roads, no hydro, sidewalks were in front of the stores only. It was a busy railroad town with a roundhouse and a railroad Y for turn around.

While living in Wembley, Dad led an active life. He was elected to council in 1940. He served four years as a councillor and then six years as mayor. He served as a member of the Home Guard during the war years. For a number of years, he was a leader of the local 4-H club. He cherishes happy memories of his association with the young people with whom he worked.

Dad was an avid curler and worked hard to promote the first curling rink in Wembley. He was, and still is, a member of the Lake Saskatoon Masonic Lodge 106 at Wembley. In May of 1975, he returned to the Wembley Lodge to receive his fifty year jewel as a Master Mason.

Mother was a member of the Eastern Star Lodge. She was active in the Anglican Women's Auxiliary. She took part in the local community groups and women's curling. She died in November, 1944, and is buried at Lake Saskatoon Cemetery.

Dad remained at Wembley after his retirement from the Wheat Pool. He worked as a timekeeper for Poole Construction and Neilson Brothers. He left Wembley in 1957 to live at Streetsville, Ontario, where he could be near his family. He worked there for 14 years as a shipping clerk for Dominion Wood Heel when he retired again at age 84.

Dad now lives with his daughter Joyce Harrington at Belleville, Ontario. Except for the loss of his eyesight, Dad is still an active man at 90. He bowls regularly with the Blind Bowling League of Belleville. In June of 1978 he and Ted returned to Wembley for the sixtieth anniversary celebration of the Lake Saskatoon Masonic Lodge. He met many old friends and enjoyed reminiscing his years at Wembley. He is the proud grandfather of 16 living grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.



A recent picture of Bill Feist.

Mom and Dad have five children; Doreen, Ted, Marjorie, Joyce born in southern Alberta, and Vera, born at Wembley under the care of Dr. Carlisle and Mrs. Scotty Smith.

Vera attended school at Wembley and Vermilion College. She is married to Walter van Brussel of Toronto. They have three children, Barbara, Donna, and Harold. They live at Ridgeway, Ontario.

Joyce went to school in Wembley and Grande Prairie. She is married to Jim Harrington of Spirit River. They have five children; Robb, Carol, Marie, Russel, and Patsy. Joyce and Jim farm at Belleville, Ontario.



Left to Right: Ted Feist, Mrs. Feist, Wes Stokke, Mrs. Stokke, baby Vera Feist, Hank Stokke, Edna Stokke, Marjorie Feist, Bill Feist, Erna Stokke, Joyce Feist, Doreen Feist.

Marjorie received her schooling at Wembley. She worked in the east during the war and married Bill McIntosh of Calgary. They returned to Wembley in 1944 and farmed the Squires place. They have three children; Ted born in Ontario, Pat and Pam, who were born at Wembley. They returned to Ontario in 1956 and farm at Ridgeway, Ontario.

Ted received his schooling at Wembley. He served overseas with the Royal Canadian Air Force. He married Peggy Chapman of Hertsfordshire, England and returned to Wembley in 1945. They farmed the Capt. Roberts place for a number of years. Peg and Ted operated the Wembley Post Office from 1949-1953. They had four sons; Tony, Dean, and Stephen born at Wembley, and Robert born at Streetsville, Ontario. Their son Dean was killed in a plane crash in the Yukon on 1973. They reside at Streetsville, Ontario. Ted is employed by Douglas Aircraft.

I, Doreen, received my high schooling at Wembley. I attended Normal School at Edmonton, then taught at Wembley public school for three years from 1936 to 1940. I was married to Wellington Riggs, son of Mr. and Mrs. S.H. Riggs of Wembley. We lived in Ontario where Wellington worked in the aircraft industry. He died in 1965. I am now retired and live at Ridgeway, Ontario.

Although we all live in Ontario, we have all made return visits to the Wembley area and treasure the happy memories of our years there.

The William Edward Feist Family

I, William Edward (Ted) Feist, was born in Macleod, Alberta September 16, 1919. I lived in Nanton, Alberta, until July, 1927, when I came to Wembley with the family, Mother and Father, and sisters, Doreen, Marjorie and Joyce.

Dad had rented a box car to move by rail from Nanton. One end of the box car contained furniture and a Model T Ford car. The other end housed eight goats.

We stayed in the Wembley Hotel until the Alberta Wheat Pool purchased a house. We attended school in the Wembley United Church across the street from our house until the new high school was built, then I attended school in the old schoolrooms.

I left school in 1935 and worked on father's farm out along the Highway northwest of Wembley, and in 1936, set up a service station (named "Ted's Service").

Leaving this in 1940, I went to Calgary on a Technical course in airframe mechanics, in training for the



Feist Service Centre on the way to Beaverlodge.

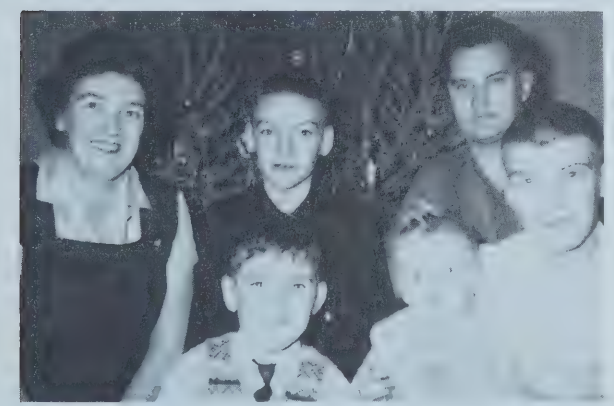
R.C.A.F. I joined the R.C.A.F. in January 1941, served in Canada and overseas in England, North Africa and Italy. I returned to England to marry Margaret Chapman (Peggy) in Hertfordshire, England in November, 1944.

Returning home and discharged from R.C.A.F., I took up farming on the Cap Roberts farm, where six crops turned out to be not the best (one year dried out and five years froze out). Of all the good and hard times that were enjoyed and endured on the farm, the most memorable was the time in 1945 when I had no tractor to plow my summerfallow and quack grass under. Jim Smith organized a plowing bee and with all the neighbors came and plowed my farm for me in one day. These are the things that are never forgotten, and what made the country a great place to have been part of.

Sons Tony and Dean were born (1945 and 1946) while on the farm which was later sold to Peter Christopherson.

I was appointed Postmaster, 1950 and while in this office son Stephen was born in 1952.

I left the position as Postmaster and I am now living in Streetsville, Ontario, where son Robert was born in 1960. In 1973, son Dean lost his life in a plane crash in the Yukon. I am still working in the aircraft industry, but I'm really a westerner at heart.



Peg, Dean, Ted, Stephen, Tony and Bob Feist.

Fern Finch

Fern Shaw came over the Edson Trail in 1911, and after that, going back out over the trail and hauling in freight with a yoke of oxen.

She and Slim Finch were married by Charles Hopkins at Lake Saskatoon. Slim had a feed barn there and then moved it to Wembley when the railroad came in 1924.

Fern's house was always open, especially to people in need.

One night during the early days of curling in Wembley, Mr. Henry Taylor Sr. was not aware that his rink was supposd to curl - so Mrs. Finch hitched up a team of mules, drove out and picked him up and brought him in for his game. There being no telephones at that time and Mrs. Finch being an outgoing person, there wasn't anything that seemed too much trouble for her.

Fern Finch passed away at St. Joseph's Hospital in Edmonton at the age of 76, on January 6, 1955. She is buried in the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery.

The Ford Family

By Elmer Ford

We arrived in Wembley April 27, 1927, coming from Yorkton, Saskatchewan. Wembley, at that time, was the end of the railroad, the "Y" being just west of the west crossing coming into town now. At this time the railroad was called the E.D. and B.C., meaning Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British columbia, but we had a different version of the name, Extremely Dangerous and Badly Constructed.

The train left Edmonton at two p.m. on Tuesday and arrived in Wembley anywhere between the hours of five p.m. to twelve p.m. Thursday night. We landed at 11:30 p.m. and were met by Albert Parry, and were taken to his home, three and a half miles north of Wembley, which was along what we now call the La Glace road. It was only a bush trail at that time.

My Dad and I both homesteaded on Saskatoon Mountain, my homestead being the Alton Parry home today. Dad took the quarter just east, which now belongs to George Cooper, but we lived on Mrs. Holmes quarter, which is now owned by Jim Cramer. We lived there for a number of years.

When the thirties hit (not to be forgotten), I was what we considered lucky, as I got a government job. My job was maintaining the highway, starting at the Mountain Side Cemetery (which is now well marked), and running three miles east of Wembley, a total of six miles. I stayed at this job and farmed until 1937. By this time, the love bug had got hold of me and I married Irene Bauer, second daughter of George Bauer and the late Mrs. Bauer.

Things were picking up a little by this time and I was able to buy a new truck to haul grain and freight or whatever we could get to do. Then in the year 1938, we had a little addition to our family, a baby girl, who we named Merna. She is now Mrs. Henry Morgan of Sexsmith, and they have two sons and one daughter, Harry, Sandra, and Allen.

In 1942 we decided to quit trucking and I went to work as grain buyer for Midland Pacific Grain Company, but this lasted only one and a half years, as I could not stand the dust, so decided to go back trucking. We built a small house in Wembley which is our present home of 38 years. We have never left Wembley.

I served as Mayor of Wembley for two and a half years and at the present time I am serving on the council.

Dad passed away in December, 1951, and Mother in December, 1963.

As a passing note, I remember George Schadeck coming to Wembley with about seven dressed pigs to sell. He sold two and gave the rest away, including one to Wong at the Chinese restaurant. He later went back and ordered a pork chop dinner at the restaurant, and Wong charged him 75 cents for the meal. George was pretty upset over it!

The George Gilmour Family

George Gilmour was born to Priscilla and William Gilmour in Ontario in the year 1879.

Mabel Matthews was born in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, England, in 1884 and was brought up by



George and Mabel Gilmour with daughters Kathleen and Ivy in Wembley, 1928.

Alderman and Mrs. W. G. Harding of Banbury, England. She came to Canada and married John Wells, a lawyer, of Toronto who died in the 1918 Flu epidemic. Mabel came west, with some friends, to visit the Gilmour family, in the summer of 1919.

George had a hard life. He was always to work under difficulties and frustration. In his early childhood, before he learned to talk, he was stricken with scarlet fever which left him stone deaf, so he had great difficulty in learning to talk and understand many things. He was a wonder with horses, though, and had a very kind heart.

Mabel Wells was young, attractive, and lonely. She felt a very deep sympathy for George in his extreme deafness and all its subsequent frustrations. They were married on December 16, 1919. She had been left well enough off, and felt that this money would take George to the best specialists in Toronto and his hearing could be cured. It never was, there was nothing the doctors could do. They came back to the homestead broke and stayed in that category the rest of their lives.

Mabel and George had two daughters, Kathleen and Ivy. When Ivy was a baby, Mabel took her to Edmonton to show her to the family of George's sister. When Kathleen was eleven years old and Ivy eight years, Mabel passed away of cancer on February 21, 1937. Dr. Carlisle's brother, David, and his wife, Bonnie, took Kathleen, finally moving to eastern Canada. Mr. and Mrs. William Grant took Ivy for a few years, after which time she went to Elsie and Howard Colby's, cousins in Edmonton, where she finished growing up. She did well in piano, and after graduating from high school, took x-ray training at the Royal Alexandra Hospital. She is married now and living in Vancouver. She has four children: Floyd, Brent, Margo, and Cam.

Kathleen is living in Wellington, Ontario, married and some of her children are now married.

George died of cancer in a nursing home in Camrose, Alberta on January 4, 1965 and is buried in the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery.

The William Gilmour Family

Grandpa, Mr. William Gilmour, was born in Paris, Ontario, August 5, 1851, son of Joseph Gilmour of Glasgow, Scotland and Hattie Chase (sister of the famous Dr. Alvin W. Chase). When grown, he moved to the Muskoka district of Ontario and took up a farm there among the heavy hardwoods. It was very difficult to farm under these conditions, with the equipment of that day. In the meantime he met and married Priscilla Ryckman Phillips, who had been born in Sarnia, Ontario on June 10, 1852, and moved north with her people. Priscilla had an amazing line of ancestors and was a very interesting person in her quiet way.

After lightning destroyed their large Ontario style barn at Port Robinson, Ontario in 1909, with its stock, machinery and hay, Grandpa Gilmour gave up trying to farm there.

With his eldest son, George, who was then 30 years old and unmarried, he went west to work on the Grand Trunk railway, which was rapidly advancing west from Edmonton.

Both Mr. Gilmour and George were so attracted to the West with all its space and fertile soil and not so large trees as the hardwoods of Ontario, they thought they would like to move west. To add to these attractions the government was offering homesteads to be filed on at the princely price of $10 for a homestead of 160 acres. There was a proviso of course, the homestead had to be proved up within three years.

So Mr. Gilmour sent for his wife, my grandmother, Priscilla Gilmour and their youngest son, Ernest William Gilmour, 17 years of age.

Mrs. Gilmour and Ernest (who preferred to be called Bill), made preparations to leave on the earliest date possible. Bill had finished high school so was ready and eager for the adventure.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour had three daughters, married; two living in Port Robinson and the third living at Port Arthur, now know as Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Mrs. Gilmour and Bill left Port Robinson, Ontario, on May 9th, 1911. They were taken by horse and buggy to Welland, some four miles distant. Here they caught a local train to Hamilton, Ontario. At Hamilton, they changed trains for Toronto. Again they changed trains taking a Canadian Pacific Railway train to Winnipeg. Enroute, while the train was being serviced at Port Arthur, their daughter, Mrs. Sarah Wood met them and they all had a good visit for the short time they were there. On they went to Calgary. They experienced such a variety of weather changes, which was natural for that time of year. After considerable delay in Calgary, a train was ready and they continued their journey to Edmonton.

It was Sunday morning when they arrived in Edmonton, and they were able, after a little difficulty, to get a hotel, and then went to church. From the description in Mrs. Gilmour's diary, it was the McDougal Church where they went for worship. Early Monday morning, they board a train to Edson, Alberta, which was then the end of the steel. It was about one o'clock when they arrived in Edson and found Mr. Gilmour and George awaiting them.

A tent had been set up and furnished with a stove and beds and a table. This table was made of boards set on stakes, and that is the only kind of a table they had all that summer.

There was a wait in Edson of three days for their trunks etc.

Mr. Gilmour and George then purchased a team of bays — Bill and Jim, for $475 and $100 for a wagon. Purchases were made of supplies and such items as they thought necessary for the long hard trip to Grande Prairie.

The morning of May 23, 1911 found the Gilmour family on their way to Grande Prairie. Mr. Gilmour was then 60 years of age and Mrs. Gilmour 59 years old. Imagine, if you can, a couple of that age going as pioneers to a new, and for the most part, untried land, in a covered wagon.

Mrs. Gilmour left us a detailed diary of this trip, and what a trip it was. Rain, mud, bridgeless rivers, breakdowns, food shortages and bears.

On one bad delay, Bill, one of the team, developed a very sore foot and they had to get it healed up before going on. Mr. Gilmour went ahead with George and some other travellers to file on land. Mr. Gilmour filed on the SW 22-71-8-W6. George filed on SW 15-71-8-W6. This homestead can still be seen, just north of the elevators in Wembley. It was taken over by the Squires family.

When conditions permitted, Mrs. Gilmour and Bill went on. Then on September 12, 1911, they went to SW 22-71-8-W6, Grandma's new home. Although at the time, it was only a tent, her diary quotes her as saying never was a home more welcome and the joy of being reunited with her family was the greatest blessing she could remember. Later, Bill filed on the quarter known as NW 15-71-8-W6.

Bill never did prove up on his homestead. World War I broke out and he joined the 66th Battalion. He was gone for the duration. When he came back, after convalescence in England from two bad wounds he received, he no longer felt the urge of the land. He went to the United States (just to look around of course) and is still there. He is now eight-five years of age and living at 3128 Midland Street, St. Joseph, Missouri, United States.

Priscilla Gilmour, my grandmother, died in Edmonton, October 18, 1945 and is buried here in Edmonton.

Grandpa Gilmour is buried at the Lake Saskatoon cemetery. A granddaughter of theirs is also buried at the Lake Saskatoon cemetery, Priscilla Wood.



Priscilla Gilmour, 90 years.
No one ever got a picture of Grandpa Gilmour. He would never allow it. But he looked just like the picture of Dr. Chase on the Dr. Chase salve cans; grandpa was a nephew of the famous Doctor.

Ann Goertzen

Ann Goertzen was born to Henry and Helena (Peters) Goertzen February 11, 1918, near Wymark, Saskatchewan. Her twin sister died later that year from the swine flu epidemic.

Ann had 16 brothers and sisters, and moved to the Peace River country with her parents in 1929. They stayed in the Immigration Hall in Grande Prairie until a house was found for them. They spend the winter in Grande Prairie. In the spring her father rented land from George Hagen in the Elmworth area.

The first summer at Elmworth consisted of working in the large garden to help feed the huge family. They had no horses so the garden had to be dug entirely by hand. In the late summer they picked blueberries day after day and sold them for 10¢ per pound.

At the age of 13 Ann had to go to work as getting an education was not considered important; feeding mouths was! She did housework for many neighbors in return for room and board and a little bit of spending money.

Ann recalls that life was hard those first years, especially so because they were not an English speaking family, however the family also managed to have good times together, playing practical jokes on one another. Her brother, Henry, was a born practical joker and he was always up to something when the parents were away. One time he fed all the younger children "chocolate candy", which in fact was Ex-lax. There was a lot of scrubbing over the wash board the next day! Another time he lined them all up, had them hold hands and instructed the first one to put an electric prod in a pail of water. Everyone was doing the two-step for awhile.

In 1937 Ann moved to Valhalla Centre with her Uncle Jake, to keep house for him, which she still does today. The moves from there to Wembley and finally to Grande Prairie are mentioned in Jacob's story.

Her present goal in life is to become a great-grandmother, but her grandchildren are not co-operating!



Ann Goertzen, early 1940's.

Jacob Goertzen

Jacob Goertzen, son of Heinrich and Helena (Schellenberg) Goertzen, was born January 12, 1905, at the Mennonite village of Chortitz located in the municipality of Morden, Manitoba. His mother passed away in 1921, when Jacob was 16 years old.

Jacob's dad married a widow from Saskatchewan in 1922 and Jacob moved with him to her farm near the village of Neuhoffnung, which was located straight south of Swift Current. Jacob recalls that the widow was deeply in debt at the time and through the hard work of his father, himself, and his brother Ben, they paid off the debt with two good crops.

Jacob didn't hold much love for his new stepmother and tells of how she tried to make him cut the buttons off his Sunday suit as her children didn't have such ornamental clothing!

In 1923 Jacob returned to Manitoba and worked for a farmer by the name of Thiessen. He recalls that his father came to collect his wages, howevr Mr. Thiessen was a fair man and said that the money was Jake's; he was the only one who had worked for it.

In 1924 Jacob returned to Saskatchewan to join in the trek to Mexico with his father. When asked why he went to Mexico when he didn't get along that well with his father and didn't like his stepmother, Jacob replied "I wanted to see another part of the world and how other people lived, but I never figured I'd sell myself so cheap."

They travelled on a settler's train and once they crossed the border into Mexico everything and everyone belonged to Mexico. They were now Mexican citizens!

Mexico, at that time, was not very civilized and Jacob recalls some stories that make us realize the hardships endured by these people in a strange land.

He remembers that some people, often storekeepers, had an eight foot high enclosure around their property and for a price one could seek protection behind these locked gates, which were guarded by a dog on a chain. If the dog started to raise a ruckus, the owner would check the outside of his property. Jacob recalls that one night when they were staying in such an enclosure they heard a lot of noise and saw "fire flying in the night", which turned out to be gun shots. In the morning they learned that the owner had shot the hat of one of the thieves, and as he knew who belonged to the hat he was able to identify one of the culprits. He was caught, hands and ankles tied, and hung on a peg on the wall until the Mexican police arrived.

When the police arrived, Jacob recalls how he wished he would have had a camera as it was a "pretty sight" with horses, saddles and guns all polished up. They were smartly uniformed with a bayonet on one side, a 30-30 on the other, and a pistol on the hip. The police wanted to know who the thief's partners had been. The thief was in a predicament because if he told his partners would get him and if he didn't, the police would. However, the police were very persuasive with their threats and he chose to confess and was put in jail.

Jacob decided he had had enough of this country and wanted to return to Canada, however he was now a Mexican citizen and they would allow him to return to Canada only for six months to visit his relatives. He had made up his mind that once he got his feet back on Canadian soil he was not going to leave again. Possibly their system of keeping records was not too efficient at that time as no one ever came looking for him. Jacob crossed the Mexican border on January 2, 1927. He still has a younger brother, John, living there, whom he has not seen for 53 years. He also has a sister whom he has not seen for the same length of time. She is now living in Bolivia, and he had his first written contact with her in many, many years this January, 1980. He has tried to contact his brother, but has had no response, although his letters have not come back, he knows he is still alive, but apparently very, very poor.

He returned to Manitoba and in the middle of the summer of 1927 he went to Swift Current area. He worked in this area until after harvest in 1928. In the latter part of 1928 he came to the Peace River country by train. He arrived in the town of Peace River and didn't even stay overnight; he took one look at "those mountains around him" and decided that was no place for him!

He took the night freight and arrived at Grande Prairie via Rycroft. He didn't know anyone in this area, however after a couple of days in Grande Prairie he met two boys and one girl from Saskatchewan.

When asked why he chose the Peace River country he replied that for no particular reason except that he wanted to see different places. His brother, Heinrich, was a big farmer in Saskatchewan at that time, owning one quarter and renting other lands. Somehow he lost the quarter he owned through some sort of mistake when he signed some papers, not realizing what he was signing. As he had a large family to feed, in 1929 he decided to follow his brother to the Peace River area where he could get a homestead for ten dollars and make a better life for himself and his family. Unfortunately, he got poor land and was never rewarded for all his hard work. It was a difficult struggle just to feed his family.

Jacob supplied his brother with the money to pay for their fare.

From Grande Prairie Jacob went to B.C. where he took a homestead approximately six miles straight west of the old Dawson. He worked the winter for George Hagen at a tie camp, getting free room and board. They were finished in about February or March and as he wanted to go to town, he asked for his pay. Mr. Hagen couldn't sell his ties and had no money to pay his men so Jacob had worked a winter for room and board! (He had planned to buy a ticket and move on, however when he didn't get his wages he was forced to stay. By the time he got his money the hungry 30's had arrived.) Mr. Hagen had gotten his supplies from Lyle's store in Beaverlodge and couldn't pay for these either, which placed the store owner in financial difficulty. Mr. Lyle shot his wife and then committed suicide. A lawyer took charge of the store and the debts from the tie camp. When Gaudin's purchased the store a couple of years later the wages owing to the men from the tie camp were paid. The wages had to be paid first before anyone else could claim any money, therefore the store took on the responsibility so they could also collect for the groceries.

Jacob gave up his homestead near Dawson Creek, which was half covered with good timber. If he could have held on he would have made money when the army moved in as they took over part of this land.

He took a homestead near Elmworth in about 1930-31. When he was away working one spring someone stole two wires off half a mile of fence. He decided it was time to leave if it had gotten to the point where he had to stay home to guard his fence!

His nephew, Herman, had taken a homestead in the Valhalla area, so in March, 1937, Jacob decided to move to Valhalla Centre where he rented land from Mrs. Young. This land was directly east of the hamlet of Valhalla Centre and belonged to Mrs. Young's father. In 1941 this land was sold to Albert Hanson. At this time Jacob was supporting his niece Ann and her daughter, Ruby. They had to move when the farm was sold and spent the winter of 1942 with his nephew, Herman, then moved into a house on the Aasen place. They were the last occupants of this old house and it still stands today.

Jacob then built a granary on his brother Heinrich's land, who had also moved from Elmworth, in 1944 and they lived there until 1945 when he purchased the quarter where the Blooming Valley school was located from Oscar Vatne. The granary was moved to the new location as a temporary shelter, however this granary was "home" until July of 1952 when Jacob, Ann, and Ruby moved to Wembley.

Jacob had worked for the prior couple of winters for Anderson Brothers' sawmill south of Wembley and felt the move would benefit Ruby in her schooling. He started working for the County of Grande Prairie in 1952 during the summer and for a couple of winters worked at the plywood plant in Grande Prairie. He couldn't stand the sawdust and went on full-time for the County, where he remained until retirement in May, 1972, at the age of 67.



Jacob Goertzen with his shingle mill in 1944.

In September of 1977, Jacob sold his Wembley residence to Carl Peterson and moved to Grande Prairie where he purchased a home, in order to be closer to shopping and doctors.

The Mel Gorgichuk Family

Mel and Rose moved to Wembley from Brownvale, near Fairview, Alberta. They previously cleared and farmed land south of Eaglesham. They arrived in Wembley in June, 1961, with six children; Allen eleven, Ken nine, Doris seven, Linda five, Danny three, and Marilyn one.

They moved into the house on land purchased from Archie Unger. More land was later purchased from Minnie Unger which was cleared and cultivated for a market garden. The garden grew to serve an area from Grande Prairie to Beaverlodge and Hythe.

Mel drove trucks and cats for six years and then concentrated on cat skinning before becoming a crane operator for L. I. Adam Contractors. During this time, Rose's green thumb prevailed to produce many bumper crops in the garden.

In 1967, the centennial year, another baby, Wayne was born, giving Rose something new to concentrate on after a seven year rest.

Mel and Rose sold out in 1978 and retired to the Okanagan area in B.C. In the spring of 1979, they purchased a motel in Falkland where they presently live and operate the Kam-Ver-Lando Motel with a grocery store and gas pumps.

Most of Mel and Rose's children are married or working out. Mel and Rose have accumulated eight grand children.

Allen and Patti are living in Red Deer and have one son. He is a partner in a drywall business headed out of Red Deer.

Ken and Sheila are in Grande Prairie where he is the General Manager of Overhead Door Company. They have two children, one son and one daughter.

Doris is married to Peter Kolybaba and they are living in Wembley where Peter and Joe Supple, Linda's fiance, operate a general construction Company. Peter and Doris have two children, one daughter and one son.

Linda and Joe are also living in Wembley and she has two sons.

Danny is single and currently living in Beaverlodge where he is working as a carpenter for Maclean Young Construction.

Marilyn is living in Red Deer where she is working and hoping to attend classes for a Social Worker. She has one son.

Wayne is the only one of the children still at home and is a valuable assistant to Mel and Rose.

Although the business is very successful and the winters much less severe, the Wembley area and the Gorgichuk's many friends are still in their hearts. Their fond memories often have them thinking of moving back as many of their children have done.



Allen, Linda, Danny, Marilyn, Doris and Ken Gorgichuk in field of cabbage grown in 1962.

The Clarence (Chick) Grubb Family

The year of 1927 Clarence D. Grubb arrived in the town of Wembley, Alberta, frm Fort Saskatchewan. Wembley was the end of Northern Albera Railway steel. There Clarence barbered and operated a pool room in partnership with Bud Lay. The shop then was across the main street from the Wembley Hotel.

Chick's family arrived the following spring of 1928. The house was on a lot behind the barber shop, a one room shed type of a frame building. Alice Grubb arrived with her five children via Northern Alberta Railway on a bright Peace River day.

Marion (Douglas), Dorothy, Glen, and Bert along with Bernice, a cousin who grew up with the family, soon settled into school and living in the frontier town, neighbouring with Rodgers, Neilsons, Osbornes, Gilmours and many more hardy families. Ben Austins living on one side and Bert Little on the other, made living quite memorable for growing children.

Clarence and Alice were kept busy by the farmers coming to town for supplies as far away as Hythe, Dawson Creek, and Rolla, stopping long enough for a hair cut and shave and a game of pool. Alice kept the local ladies happy by marcel waving their hair in her own home, and did sewing for friends and neighbours. Clarence (Chick) kept his trumpet handy and played at every opportunity. Trumpet music in the Peace was something everyone enjoyed even if it was solo.

Sports days and July 1 brought people to town to enjoy a silent movie at the hall. The same hall still graces the main street of Wembley. The larger school was filled to over flowing at the time. The McNaught sisters taught at the two room school house, and the United Church at the end of main street was used for first graders.

Clarence soon had Henry Rollin working with him in the shop, cutting hair. Keeping gas barrel stoves going, pumping up gas lights and looking after the customer's needs was a full time job for everyone. Bud Lay knew the poolroom operation very well.

In 1930 Clarence, Alice, and family moved out of Wembley to the homestead in the Aspen Ridge district south of Huallen. They left Wembley, but not their friends and neighbours. Proving up the homestead and providing a livelihood for his family was quite an undertaking. Clarence remarked to Alice, "It's a long way from Desmoines, Iowa, United States and March, England to the dirt homestead in the Peace River country!" They built a log house on the land. The first few acres were cleared and broken with a team of mules, then horses, then a tractor. The children picked roots, got the kitchen wood, carried in the water, fed the chickens, fetched the cows. Alice kept her sewing machine busy, not only for her family, but for friends and neighbours as well.

In 1933, the Grubb's lost their home by fire. The children were at school and Clarence away at work when the chimney fire started. With no help, Alice's first thought was her sewing machine. She dragged it to safety, and had to watch the rest of their possession go up in smoke. Fine neighbours took them in, and clothed and fed them, until they were able to move into an unoccupied house on Kaufman's land. Then another house was built on the homestead.

The Grubb children attended school at the Aspen Ridge school, later at Aspen Dale when the school district was divided, and the school was relocated. The younger generation of Grubbs recall with nostalgia the fun of the community, card parties, dances and concerts.

Alice who had a great sense of humor, would play little pranks on her guests when the card parties were at her place. On one occasion she made baloney sandwiches out of red inner tube, when someone bit it, it would S-T-R-E-T-C-H and be good for a real laugh. Another surprise of hers was a sawdust cake all beautifully decorated, to catch the unsuspected guest. Not to be forgotten in the Grubb story is Clarence's contribution to the Beaverlodge band.

Bernice finished her grade nine at Aspen Ridge, moved to Wembley and worked for Reverend and Mrs. Huston, to finish her schooling. She married Gordon Bernard of Beaverlodge; they raised three children, two girls, one boy. She is now married to Jack Labarge and lives in Michigan, United States.

Marion and Glen served in the Armed Forces overseas during the war. On their return, Marion married Nora Brown of London, Ontario, and brought her to the farm at Aspen Dale.

Clarence, Alice, and Dorothy moved to Grande Prairie. Clarence went barbering for Clive Ireland. Alice was not well at the time. For a while, Marion and Nora ran the farm, then moved to Dawson Creek. They have four children; three boys, one girl. They are now retired in Victoria, B.C.

Dorothy married George Miller of Wembley. They reside in Grande Prairie. They have no children. George is employed at the College.

Glen married Audrey Purves of Wembley. Glen is employed by the County of Grande Prairie. They raised two children; one girl and one boy. Bert took over the farm.

Clarence and Alice moved back to Wembley once more, and took up barbering, but again the demon fire proved his undoing. He lost his shop in Wembley by fire. They went back to the farm and lived with Bert for awhile, then Clarence and Alice moved to Hythe. He took over the barbershop from George Dunbeck. Clarence took sick in Hythe and passed away in the Beaverlodge Hospital August 31, 1954 on his 67th birthday. Alice returned to live with Bert on the homestead for eight years, Bert being single and still farming the land. Alice passed away May 8, 1962 at the age of 76 years.

The Glen Grubb Family

by Audrey Grubb

Glen Conrad Grubb was born to Alice and Clarence Grubb in Sandpoint, Idaho on March 13, 1924. He moved to Wembley with his family in 1928.

The family moved to their homestead in the Aspen Ridge (later Aspen Dale) district in 1930, where the family grew up and went to school.

Glen enlisted in the army in 1943, taking his training at Camp Borden, Ontario. He served in the United Kingdom and Continental Europe. After the war, Glen worked at different jobs — helping on the farm when needed.

In March, 1949, Glen and I (Audrey Purves) were married. I was born to Charlotte (Lottie) and Lorney Purves, on February 3, 1928, in the old log house on the farm, which is now known as the Otto Kirscht place.

In 1954, we moved to Valemount, B.C. when Glen worked for Clarence Johnson. We returned to Wembley in 1957. Glen started working for the County of Grande Prairie in April, 1960, and has been with them ever since.

Our daughter, Terry Lee, was born November 25, 1949. She married George Dechief of Baytree, Alberta on November 28, 1970. George is a welder. They live in Dawson Creek, and have three daughters; Michelle, Lynda, and Cindy.

Son Randall (Randy) Wayne was born October 25, 1951. He married Marilyn Brent of Wembley on October 3, 1970. Randy is a millwright at North Canadian Forest Industries. They live in Wembley and have two sons; Kelly and Jody.

The Donald Guenette Family

Donald and Agnes came to Wembley in October, 1960 from Gundy, British Columbia with four children, Robert aged eight, Kenneth six, Wilfred two and a half, and Diane, who, being the baby then, was nine months old.

Don and Agnes were both born in Alberta, Don in Spruce Grove, Alberta, and Agnes in Webster, Alberta (near Sexsmith). They have lived in the area more or less ever since.

Don worked on the railroad as a Section-foreman and being transferred from Gundy, British Columbia, their furniture was moved by railroad in a box car and Don rode on the speeder, (at that time they weren't covered as they are now) and his wife drove down by car with the family.

While in Wembley they had two more girls born to them to even up the female population at home. The girls names were Sharon and Brenda.



Guenette children from left to right: Wilfred, Kenneth, Robert, Diane, with Sharon standing and Brenda on Robert's knee.

Robert, Kenneth and Wilfred attended the Wembley school and were active in Cubs and later Boy Scouts. Don was a leader of the Cubs and Scouts and also was a volunteer fire fighter until he moved out of Wembley to Grande Prairie, where he is working as a Janitor Contractor with his family.

After moving to Grande Prairie, twin boys, Shayne and Dwayne were born to make a total of eight children.

The Guenettes found the people very friendly and found it didn't take very long to get to know almost all the people in the small community.

They drove to attend Mass in Beaverlodge or Grande Prairie which is almost the same mileage either way.

Bob is now a certified heavy duty mechanic in Edmonton. Ken is partsman for an automotive supply company in Lethbridge. Wilfred is an electrician in Grande Prairie. Diane is going through for an X-ray technician. Sharon, Brenda, Shayne and Dwayne are still at home.

Smiler Hadley

by Anne Willsey

Russell (Smiler) Hadley was never known by his Christian name. He came honestly by his nickname, Smiler, for he was rarely seen without a smile. Smiler fired the first passenger train into Grande Prairie in 1916. While laying over in Grande Prairie, he met and married a young English girl, Alice Card. Their homes were many and varied but in 1925, they left Edmonton and moved north as the steel was being pushed further West. They moved from Grande Prairie to Wembley in 1928.



Russel Hadley and wife Alice taken around 1920 or 21. Russel drove the first train into Grande Prairie. Alice is Mrs. Alf Childs' sister.

Frances and Christine Schenks, who now live in Dawson Creek, were good friends of the Hadleys. Frances was night watchman, Carl Gage was Engineer, Clark McCombs was station agent, and Jack Carley was conductor.

Mrs. Hadley remembers a time when the Hockey team wanted to go to Grande Prairie to play and as there weren't enough cars, they telegraphed the head of the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia railroad in Edmonton to see if they could take the train to Grande Prairie. The crew donated their work and each passenger paid fifty cents. Of course, they had to take a mascot, so they took Dinty Moore's white goat and smuggled it aboard. It had its own private room as they stashed it in the ladies washroom. When they reached Grande Prairie, a lot of the passengers stopped at the Donald Hotel where they proceeded to feed the goat beer. When the team went to play, they took the goat on the ice, who by this time was so drunk, it couldn't stand up. Mrs. Hadley recalls everyone had a wonderful time and lots of laughs but doesn't know if they won the game or not.

Another time she recalls a near tragedy at a Christmas party in the United Church. The church was decorated with Chinese lanterns with lighted candles inside. Shortly after Santa arrived, one fell down on top of some little girls' dressed as Angels in paper costumes. Santa immediately grabbed the lantern up and in so doing, his beard caught on fire. Luckily, it was able to be put out with no one being hurt, but Santa was a real hero in more ways than one.



Mrs. Alice Hadley, Hilda Popkey and Gibby, Mrs. Childs and Georgie, George Clayton and Smiler Hadley, meeting George at the airport after being invalided home.

One hot spring day, Jack Carley was wearing a very long sweater. Despite the heat, he kept it on though usually he only wore a shirt and his collar open. Mrs. Hadley recalls someone asked "Jack, why don't you take off that sweater?" To which Jack replied "Can't. Seat's out of my pants".

As the steel went on, so did Smiler and his wife. Their next stop was Hythe where their only daughter Lorraine was born. They left Hythe and moved to McLennan where they lived for twenty-six years. They retired to Calgary and are still living there.

Lorraine who was a school teacher, taught at Beaverlodge. She is married to David Craig and they live in Calgary. They have two daughters, Jane and Colleen.

The Martin Hein Story

by Carol Thomson (neice) as told by Emily Hein

Martin Hein moved to Wembley from Waskatenau, Alberta, in the fall of 1945. He had followed his friends, the Nickels, when they came to take over the Wembley Hotel.

When we first reached Wembley, he helped out at the hotel, but later took over the B.A. Bulk station which used to be next to the Pool Elevator.

In 1951, Martin married Emily Thomsen. They set up housekeeping in the house next to Matt Graham's livery stable. Martin already had one large truck for hauling. He purchased a second truck to haul grain. He continued in the trucking business for some years after the bulk station was shut down. As well he looked after the Co-op Livestock Yards. Thus he was kept busy hauling grain, livestock, coal, etc.

In 1957, he started to work for the Village of Wembley when they began to install the water and sewer system. Gradually the trucking business was phased out as the village foreman job grew into cleaning streets of snow, hauling garbage, and other numerous chores. Martin continued to work for Wembley as its status changed from a village to a town.

In the meantime the Hein family expanded. The additions were David in 1955, Judy in 1957, and Doug in 1960. The family needed more living space and so moved into the old police barracks house where they live presently. There were two more additions; Janice in 1965, and Joanne in 1967. Judy married Darcy Adams adding another.

On May 29, 1979 the old Wembley Department Store caught fire. After fighting the fire all day, Martin experienced pains in his chest. He was sent home from the Grande Prairie Hospital after being told he had smoke inhalation and told to rest. The pains had not improved the next day so he returned to the hospital again. While being treated, he passed away from a heart attack. He was buried June 4, 1979 in the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery.

Martin is remembered by many people for his untiring patience. He would tinker away at fixing something all day and never lose his patience. He loved kids and always a bunch were following him as he worked from the time he drove truck until his death.

My husband, Buck Thomson, fondly remembers riding with Martin in his grain truck on numerous occasions. When asked his name, he'd proudly reply "Bucky Hein". Probably those trips had something to do with his profession now being a truck driver. As his neice, the thing I recall about Uncle Martin and my youth were the whisker rubs he thoroughly enjoyed giving us kids while we squealed and squealed.

Martin enjoyed fishing down at the Wapiti and playing crib. He is fondly remembered by all the past and present residents of Wembley.

The John Holliday Family

by Eleanor Holliday

We arrived in Wembley in 1960 a family of three and left six years later a family of six. John was employed by the Alberta Wheat Pool as local agent and we lived in the Pool residence across the street from the United Church.

In a short time we were made welcome in the community and developed many good friends as we became involved with community life.

We remember: Our first effort at gardening and Fred Kopp's generosity of giving us land space for potatoes. Mrs. Bunyan Sr. and the years of singing with the United Church Choir. The United Church women and Mrs. Edgar somehow keeping track of all the food and money at the events they catered for. Mrs. Pete Cranston's African violets. Helping clear underbrush from the park on the Wapiti River and the picnics we had there. Dances across the river at South Wapiti and dances at Lake Saskatoon with Doug and Mary Keown. Canadian Girls in Training and their Christmas candlelite services. Curling and the great sportsmanship of people like Bill Watson. The Wembley Fire Department and Martin Hein. Coffee mornings with Emily Hein, Louella Watson and Thelma Randall. The Village Library and helping the school children with their books. Mrs. Rigby and her neighborliness. The Rautenstrauch store and grocery delivery by Wolf. Mary MacKenzie and the Order of Eastern Star in Grande Prairie. Uncle Bert Watson, good friend of Lee, Alva, Brenda, and Marge. Last but not least "wooden" sidewalks.

Wembley was the best possible town to have spent some years.

John is now farming and doing carpentry. He left the "Pool" in 1977 due to deteriorating health. Eleanor is working at George McDougall Hospital at Smokey Lake. Lee is a registered nurse at Royal Alexander Hospital in Edmonton. Alva is going to school at NAIT. Brenda is attending University of Alberta. Marge is in Grade 11.

The William Huston Family

by William Huston

Working under the Methodist church, we had come from Ontario to Alberta in 1920. The church saw the need of a United Church in the Wembley charge, so we

left Wainwright in July of 1933 to answer the Wembley call.

We loaded our four children, Edith Mary, Helen Isabel, James Palmer, and Harold Wesley into the 1922 Model T Ford and headed to the Peace River Country. The trip took several days, as we had to stay over in Athabasca till the roads dried enough to be passable. We passed through Smith, Slave Lake, Grande Prairie, and finally arrived at our new home, the Wembley United Church manse, which at one time had been a telegraph office at Lake Saskatoon. It was heated by a hot air coal furnace.

We found the people very friendly, and we enjoyed the wide horizons and the saskatoons that grew in abundance. The pastoral charge had five points. Wembley had weekly service at 7:30 p.m., Scenic Heights at 11 a.m., and Lake Saskatoon at three p.m. The last alternated Sundays with Dimsdale and Lower Beaverlodge. The 15 to 20 mile trip was made with car if the roads were passable, otherwise, I had to borrow a horse or team to make the circuit. Occasionally I visited across at South Wapiti. Years before I went over there, the Anglican Sunday School van had preceeded me. I did baptise several children over there. The baptisms were held at the Riggs home, a central place for the Riggs, Elliott, and Sutherland children to be gathered for the event.

Money was scarce for books or even small treats. Soon after reaching Wembley, we began buying milk from the Feist family. One day Bill asked me "Can you pull teats?"

"I sure can" I replied.

"Well", Bill said, "if you pay me $30 at the rate you are now paying for milk, you may have a cow". He gave me an Ayrshire that gave plenty of good rich milk. We were able to make our own butter, to sell some milk, and occasionally make some skim milk cheese with borrowed equipment. What a boon to our family was that cow, at that price then. I often think of Bill's thoughtful generosity.

Other friends and neighbours that come to mind are McLeans, Jim and Laura Whenham, the Archers, Bunyans, Dr. A.M. Carlisles, the Cooks (police), and Wallace Edgar, an elevator agent.

Grande Prairie was our nearest hospital until a small one was built at Beaverlodge.

We left Wembley, July 1937, and went to Wainwright. My wife, Edith Louise, died in August of 1974.

Our daughter Ellen, now Mrs. William Ellenwood, lives in Phoenix, Arizona. Helen is a medical missionary in Nepal. James is teaching in New Hampshire. Harold died in Regina, August of 1977. I now reside in Camrose.



Dr. Helen Huston in Nepal.

The Boyd D. Johnson Family

by Boyd Johnson

I arrived in Wembley in September 1927 from Saskatchewan where I had worked for the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool at Hollinguest, Saskatchewan, south east of Swift Current.



Boyd and Pauline Johnson, 1973.



Mrs. H.W. Rogers, Herman Trelle, Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Mr. H.W. Rogers and Mrs. Trelle.

I worked for the Grande Prairie Grain Co., for two years and then for Midland and Pacific, until I left Wembley in 1938, except for a one year absence, during which Alex McGregor was the agent. I returned to Wembley for a short stay in 1939, while working as a Pool repairman for the Peace River District.

My next venture was as a Locomotive Engineer for C.P.R. out of Calgary, Alberta from 1943 to 1964. I retired from the C.P.R. to Victoria, B.C. in November, 1967. Pauline, my wife, passed away September 8, 1976 from cancer. Our son Harry crashed over Germany, December 6, 1944, while serving as a pilot of a Lancaster bomber. Our son Douglas works for the smelter in Trail, B.C. Our daughter Dorcas passed away September 6, 1978, also from cancer, leaving two boys and one girl. The girl works as a Dental Mechanic, the oldest boy lives in Calgary, Alberta and the youngest is still attending school, while staying at home. Our daughter Pearl lives here in Victoria, she has two boys, one away on his own, the other attending Grade Eleven.

I always remember how famous Wembley became during Herman Trelle's reign as Wheat King. Wherever you went if you mentioned Wembley to farmers they became very interested and curious about the "King" and the country.

The Clarence Johnson Family

Clarence's folks came from Sweden to Montana, U.S.A. early in the century where they farmed until 1923. Then they moved to Telfordville, Alberta where Clarence went to school and helped with the farming. During the war years he worked for the Americans in the North West Territories driving trucks and "cats". During that time he met Stan Eckstrom and together they became employees of South Wapiti Lumber Co. at Wembley in 1945. Early in 1946 Jack Radford, Stan Eckstrom, Rudy Sohm, Alex Howden and Clarence formed a company which they named Stan's Sawmills Ltd. They bought an H.D. 10 cat with which they pulled a grader for road building for the County and in the winter they sawed lumber for South Wapiti Lumber Co.

Jo (Alma) Ballantyne arrived in Wembley the second of January, 1946, to become the senior teacher in the local school. She was born in Southern Alberta, educated at the University of Alberta and spent several years teaching school in various communities throughout the province. After spending the fall of 1945 in Toronto furthering her studies she was ready to resume teaching and was given the post at Wembley. The secretary of the school board, Mrs. Rhea MacLean met her at the station and took her to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Newcom where she found an excellent boarding house. Teachers on the staff at the time were Mrs. Helen (McNab) Taylor and Mrs. Mildred (Wilson) Bell. Grades from one to ten were taught until the end of June, 1946. In the fall of that same year saw the beginning of a complete high school with the addition of Mr. William Rigby to the staff.

During the winter of 1946 Mrs. Hazel Newcom had a house party to which she invited a number of people among whom were two young men, Clarence Johnson and Stan Eckstrom. A romance blossomed between Clarence and Jo which culminated in their marriage in July, 1947. They continued to live in the area as Clarence continued his partnership in Stan's Sawmills Ltd.

Their first home was built by Clarence and his brother, Freeman, located where the Glen Grubb home stands now. Their neighbors were John and Betty Bunyan on one side and Tom and Evelyn Bunyan on the other-good neighbors-good times. Every fall the family followed Clarence across the Wapiti to the bush and lived in a little make-shift bungalow there. It was an unusual life style but a good and healthy one. Mrs. Alma Kinsman from Beaverlodge-Halcourt area was the cook. Her pie and her personality became famous throughout the winter camps and made life full of good fun and good food.

By 1951 Clarence and Jo were the sole owners of Stan's Sawmills which then became Johnson's Spruce Mills Ltd. The other partners had sold their shares and had started projects of their own.

Clarence and Jo also had three children by 1953, Dwain, Keith and Cherie. Stan's Sawmills had contracted sawing rights from Hystad Bros. of Dimsdale during those past years so Clarence continued to do so. When Hystads bought timber in Valemount, B.C. in 1953, the Johnson family sold their home in Wembley and moved all of their equipment by flatcar in the summer of 1954 to that southern community. They continued to live there for twelve years. One more son Lloyd was added to the family. Their company enlarged to the point where they owned their own timber, did their own planing and marketing. In the spring of 1965 Clarence had a heart attack which made the family do some re-evaluating and it was decided to try to sell to lessen the pressure, and to improve the schooling for the family. They moved to Vernon, B.C. the summer of 1966 and were completely sold out by the winter of 1967.

Clarence and Jo now lead a quieter life as they are semi-retired and travel takes the place of work. Their most recent trip to Wembley was to attend the funeral of Alma Kinsman, their long time cook and friend. Although it was a sad occasion it is always enjoyable to renew acquaintances and see old friends of those first married years in Wembley and "across the Wapiti".

The Walter Jordan Family

by Mrs. Wes Stokke

Walter and Martha Jordan and son George came to Canada from England in 1918 at the end of World War I and settled in the Donnelly area. Like many other settlers engaged in building their new home and clearing their land, a large part was done by hand. At that time neighbors were few and far between, but according to the Jordan's each was always willing to help the other. They spent approximately 46 years in that area.

They were very kind people and Mrs. Jordan acted as midwife for a good many neighbors who couldn't get to hospital in those early days. They had one other son who died at the age of two of spinal meningitis.

They decided to move to the Wembley area in 1944 after buying the Bill Craig farm just east of Wembley. Walter Jordan had fought in World War I and the Boer War and could tell many interesting stories of his experiences. George farmed the land and took a great interest in raising prize grain and won many top awards for his wheat and other seed at our County Fair as well as Calgary and Toronto. Mr. Jordan always grew a wonderful vegetable garden and lovely flower beds. Mrs. Jordan was a good neighbor and cook and many a delicious batch of goodies arrived at our house through her kind generosity.



Mr. and Mrs. Jordan and George at Donnelly.

We were all very saddened by her death in October of 1953. George and Mr. Jordan continued on at the farm until 1964 when George sold out and moved into the Village of Wembley. He bought the home of Mrs. Stokke, Senior, formerly the Henry Rollin residence. George and his father lived there in retirement. Mr. Jordan, Senior, died in January of 1966 at the age of 84 years. George had never married and lived on in Wembley until his death in 1972. They were a family that left many memories for those who knew them.

The Kastner Family

by Olive Kastner

The Kastner family arrived in Wembley in 1930, but Mr. and Mrs. William Kastner, senior, and Armine, aged 16 years, were the only members to stay in Wembley. I believe the other son, Walter, went either to Grande Prairie or Dawson Creek. Armine went to High School in Wembley and often spoke warmly of Mrs. Storm who taught High School. One thing I remember him telling about was how she would knit while teaching them. She also taught him a great love of fine literature. He then went to work for Mr. Kranz in the drug store and manned the telephone office at the back of that department. The depression was affecting everyone and Armine told me that the only way he could afford to finish grade 12 was to scrounge the pencil stubs that others threw away and he wrote his notes on the covers of scribblers of other's notebooks. Mrs. Storm lent him his set of text books.

I went to Wembley in 1941 as a first year teacher and felt very fortunate to get a job in a town, as most of my peers had to begin teaching in one room country schools. I had come to live in Grande Prairie in 1936 with my family - my father was Louis Kowensky.

When I went to Wembley I boarded with Mrs. Herman Trelle. It was such a rainy fall that we could not go anywhere by car. I travelled by train from Grande Prairie to Wembley and the first time I got back to visit my parents was a month later. I went in a caboose of a freight train!

We had lots of fun though. In winter we went bob sledding, (I think south of Wembley) and we skated on the pond about half a mile south west of Wembley.



Mr. and Mrs. William Kastner and Armine in about 1939.

There were three school rooms. Edna Robertson and I taught from grade one to eight. Herb Sagert had the High School grades in a basement room. We had beautiful real slate black boards. I remember my first day when the Cameron children came to school in the morning, they couldn't get the youngest brother to come into the building. So I went out and he was clinging to the gate post. The efforts of both his father and myself failed to pry him loose. However he did come into the building about ten a.m.

There was no doctor or dentist when I got to Wembley nor any bank. Rev. Truax was the United Church minister and I had a small C.G.I.T. group.

We played a lot of badminton in the community hall. One other memory I have is of going to Grande Prairie by train. Mr. Kranz had some kind of arrangement with a bank in Grande Prairie and did banking for Wembley residents. He asked me to carry a brown paper envelope to Grande Prairie for him and to give it to my Dad who would know what to do with it. I innocently carried this envelope and when I gave it to my Dad he opened it, laughed and while putting it in his safe at our store, told me I had been carrying around $500.00!! That was a lot of money in those days!

The next year, 1942, Armine joined the army and I went to Grande Prairie to teach. We were married in 1943. Later we had three children - Michael who is now a doctor of chemistry and doing cancer research in Berlin; Andrea who is here in Abbotsford, has two little girls and is a Social Worker; and Trudy who is in Grande Prairie. Armine died suddenly in 1972. I am still teaching.

The Paul Kirscht Family

Paul Kirscht Sr. came to the Wembley area from Englehart, Ontario, in 1927, as men were needed to help harvest. He liked the country so he purchased two quarters of land three miles south of Wembley and went back to Ontario.

In April of 1928 he returned with wife Pauline and children Paul Jr., Elsie, and Otto. Son Richard had passed away in 1927 at the age of 19. Daughter Martha stayed in Ontario, married Bruno Neumann and had two children. She passed away March 10, 1980. Son Eric also stayed in Ontario. He worked in a rubber factory until retiring. Eric and wife, Doris, live in Kitchener. They have one son, Dick, who is married with two children.

It took one week for the Paul Kirscht Sr. family to get to Wembley by train and another week for their livestock and furniture to arrive. They lived in a small log house that was on the land and built on an addition in the fall. A new house wasn't built until 1944. The family broke 100 acres of land with a handle plow and four horses. Ten acres of oats were seeded the first year for green feed. In 1929, three more quarters of land were purchased. Their first tractor and threshing machine was purchased in 1935. Their first close neighbours were George Rosek, Finlay Watson, and the Metituk family. The children walked or rode horses to school at Wembley. Some Sunday's the family went to church at the Lutheran Church south of Huallen.

Paul Kirscht Jr. married Margaret Goertzen in 1939 and farmed with his father. They lived on the one quarter of land that his father gave them when they married. They got divorced five years later. Paul remarried in 1951 to Irene Stackman; they had three children, Elsie, Elford, and Martha. Paul sold his farm in 1971 to the Lloyd



Paul Kirscht Sr. with grandson Richard in 1945.

Massee family and bought a house in Wembley where he lived for five years. He sold his house and resided three years in Central Park Lodge in Grande Prairie where he passed away February 4, 1979 at the age of 75.

Elsie Kirscht left home at the age of 16 to work at Sexsmith. She then went to Ontario for a few years; came back to Edmonton where she met and married Fred Haluss in the 1930's. They moved to B.C., and have one daughter, Lorraine, who is married with two children. Fred passed away and Elsie has retired to Vernon, B.C. where she lives now.

Otto Kirscht married Agnes Goertzen in 1940. They lived across the creek from his father's place on one quarter of land which they had purchased for $300. They had four children there; Richard, Alex, Eric, and Dorothy. They lived there until Otto's father passed away in 1949, then moved to the home place to look after the mother who passed away in 1950. One more daughter, Ruth, was born in 1951. They lived there until 1964 when they purchased the Miller farm just outside of Wembley where they live now. Their son Richard married Marlene Schubert in 1966. They have four children; Kevin, Darren, Jason, and Carrie, and live on the original Kirscht farm. Richard farms and drives school bus.



Pauline Kirscht.

Alex lives at home with his parents and farms his own land.

Eric married Jean McInnis in 1968, has three children; Bonnie, Stanley, and Warren, and lives south of Wembley on his brother Alex's farm. Eric works as a carpenter.

Dorothy married Lloyd Massee in 1967, has two children; Linda and Alex and live on the Paul Kirscht Jr. farm. Lloyd works as a truck driver.

Ruth married Michael MacNeil in 1970, has three children; Malcolm, Patrick, Paula, and lives at Fort St. John, B.C. Michael works as a heavy equipment operator.

Robert and Lawrence Kranz

By Mrs. Nellie Corbin

My brother Bob came to Canada in 1905, the year that Alberta was declared a province. He wanted to homestead, and in Canada, you only had to be 18 years of age, so he went up and got a homestead near Calgary. By the time he proved up on that, they were settling the Peace River Country, so in 1911 he went there and bought South African Scrip W½ 24-73-8-W6, southeast of La Glace. It was 320 acres and he paid a Boer War Veteran $720 for it and proved up on it. He then settled in Lake Saskatoon and opened a sash and door factory.

There was a company that went bankrupt somewhere in the Peace River country and he decided to purchase the stock thinking he would find a buyer. He was to meet the one who was selling the stock, in a hotel, and went there and stayed around the hotel for several days. Finally a man came to Bob and told him he was to meet a Bob Kranz and he wondered where he was. Well, Bob told him he was Bob Kranz, and he bought the stock and took it to Lake Saskatoon. People came to him for things they needed, so he decided to start a store. From what I undrstand, he started in a poolroom which he had owned, sold, and then bought back.

Lawrence Kranz was in England serving in World War I and his company came back on a boat, landing in Boston around the end of 1919 or first part of 1920. Bob wrote him to come up and see if he would like it, and Lawrence went up, liked it and stayed.

I went up in 1923 for about two months. Bob had a small house which he had let the butcher, Tom Dancey, and family live in, as they had been burnt out. Lawrence had retained a room in this house, which he put me in. I had my three year old daughter with me. Lawrence slept with the telegraph operator, as his wife was away on a holiday. Bob had to sleep at the store, where he had a room on account of fire insurance. Bob and Lawrence took their meals with Mrs. Dancey.

Bob moved to Wembley the winter of 1924-1925. He had the grocery store built, but moved some buildings from Lake Saskatoon. There was a drug store, clothing store, and telephone exchange office. They built all three into a general store — one of the best in the north.

Bob also built a modern flour mill, which had only been opened a short while when it burned to the ground in a spectacular fire. Being uninsured, it was never rebuilt. This was a tragedy, as a lot of farmers sold



wheat to him for flour. This way they were able to pay their grocery bills at the store.

The Bank of Commerce in Wembley, operated from June 15, 1925 to May 31, 1935, when it discontinued business. Bob fixed a corner of his store to accommodate the farmers' banking needs. Lawrence went to Grande Prairie daily to get money, to cash cheques, etc.

He sold about 1946-1947 to Alex Mitchell, who kept it for several years.

The Kranz brothers retired to Victoria, B.C. where they lived until their deaths, Lawrence in the sixties and Bob in June 1974.



Allen McKenzie, Abe Thiessen, Stan Boyd, Lawrence Kranz, Tom Watson and Charlie Cowpar.



Mr. Bob Kranz

One of the clerks remembers a time when Bob ordered a carload of groceries from one of the wholesale travellers. Upon making settlement, he was asked which way he preferred settlement: five per cent for so much cash, ten per cent for more cash. When Bob said it was all cash, the traveller looked stunned and couldn't believe his ears. But this was the way Bob Kranz operated, and he was able to give people good prices on groceries. There was no business in the country that could undersell him.

William Nathan Lay

by Murray Lay

My Uncle William (Bud) Lay was born in 1895, at Eastern Townships, Danville, Quebec, to Thomas Lay and Julia Strew, of Scottish descent. Bud was the third of eight children, of which three sisters were school teachers and four brothers, at one time, were railway men.



Bud Lay at his house two miles west of the Beaverlodge river in the Gimli district about 1930.

Bud moved to Wembley with the steel to run a poolroom and barber shop with Clarence Grubb. The lot across from the hotel was their location. The poolroom burned down in 1931. He lost the property to the Mortgage Company in 1933 and moved back to the farm, with Mrs. Hill as housekeeper and midwife for the area. They put in the depression years, gardening and cutting hair and also ran a cafe in Beaverlodge, playing cards with good friends and neighbors.

He then moved up the Alaska Highway to Whitehorse, playing cards with the boys, then back to Hudson Hope in 1942. He ran the Ideal Home Rooming house for Miller Auto Court (promoter of Hudson Hope Strangers).

Neighbours were always welcomed as friends of Bud. Mrs. Hill passed away in 1943. Bud lived on always known by his tie and siwash sweater. Bud became hospitalized in Prince George, and spent his last five years in Veterans' Home in Edmonton. He claimed Veterans' Home floors were polished as fine as Buckingham Palace, when he was a guard there.

Bud passed away January 20, 1973 and is buried in the Veterans' plot in Grande Prairie, close to his brother Art Lay.

The Leilers of SE 21-71-8-W6

by Sonja Leiler (Stamp)

Early settlers to the Wembley area can recall that the land was open parkland. Before this land was officially

surveyed in 1909, people squatted on the land. In order to obtain title, they had to break 30 acres and live on that quarter for six months of the year. If people applied for relief, they had to pay for it by cutting brush along road allowances.

The coming of the railroad in 1924 hastened general development as did the continuation of it on to Hythe in 1928.



Henry and Sonja Leiler - 1978.

On this quarter, (SE 21-71-8-W6), Hardy Fulton (1915) was the original owner. Some of the other people who lived here were; Charlie Connelly (1918) and his family, "Dinty" Bob Moore and family, Bill and Oliver Bell in the 1930's, and the Dupont family, who later moved to Los Angeles, California. Marjorie, their daughter, attended school in Wembley for a while and has since achieved her doctorate. Nelson Remington, a barrel-sized bachelor, resided here in the early 1940's until the McRae family moved here in 1945. William John McRae, his wife Martha, two sons Robert and Donald, continued to farm here until they sold to Werner Stamp in 1969. The McRae family remained in the house here until retiring to Grande Prairie in the spring of 1970. Donald Watson, his wife Louella, and their family (Brent, Elaine, and Brenda) rented the farm home from May 1970 to April 1973. Norman Mundziakiwicz, wife Betty, and their three children (Brenda, Bobby-Jo, Eric) also rented the same place from May 1973 to July 1977. From August 1977 to the present, Henry and Sonja (nee Stamp) Leiler own the property and her brothers farm it.

Sonja was raised and educated in the Wembley area. Over a period of years, she continued her education at the University of Alberta until her convocation in November 1977. From 1950 on, she pursued a teaching career in central and northern Alberta schools. In 1956, she married Henry Leiler, mechanic, of Sexsmith. He was born in Plezza, Italy, on January 12, 1929. He was raised and educated in a multi-lingual mountain village near Yugoslavia and Austria. During World War II, he fought with Marshal Tito's Partisan Army. After serving his time in the regular army and mechanic's apprenticeship, he immigrated to Austria and then to Canada. Henry has worked at his trade in the South Peace since 1953. The Leilers have taken an active interest in sports, travelling, family, and community functions.

The Murray Jack Light Family

Murray Jack Light, wife Iva, and two sons John and Robert transferred to Wembley from Drumheller, Alberta in 1925 with the Alberta Provincial Police. At that time, the Peace River Block as far north as Hudson Hope and Finlay Forks, B.C. was patrolled by horseback. Jack was involved with the other residents of the area in bringing in special hunting dogs to help control the coyotes.

In 1927, the family transferred to Hythe, Alberta where Iva taught school and Jack homesteaded and went into business. They remained in the Hythe area until 1956 when Iva died. Jack spent the remaining years in Fort St. John and Fairview. The three sons and their families still reside in Fort St. John, Red Deer, and Fairview respectively.



Const. Jack Light.

The John MacKenzie Family

by Jean MacKenzie Fox

My parents, with their large family of six sons and five daughters, came to Canada in 1927. We were the largest family to come into Canada at that time. Our picture was taken in Montreal, Mom, Dad, and the whole family as the largest coming to Canada.

My father was a fisherman in a place called Campbelltown, Argyllshire, Scotland and one of the best too! We left home on March 26, arrived at Glasgow, then boarded a liner called S.S. Athenia. That was a rough passage, believe me, for I was deathly sick.



James MacKenzie, of Campbelltown, Scotland, his wife and eleven children, constituted the largest family of the thirty-seven who were among the British settlers arriving on the all-British special over Canadian National lines Thursday morning. Mr. MacKenzie and his family are going to Wembley, Alberta, and will settle on a farm close to that of Herman Trelle, the world's champion wheat and oats grower. Mr. MacKenzie has lived on a farm all his life.

We arrived at Halifax, went throuch customs on the train again, and stopped at Montreal for a few hours where my Dad's sister lived. Then we went on to Winnipeg where we had to go through immigration. You had to cook your own meals and sleep there for two or three days. It must have been hard on my mother as my youngest sister was just two years old and I was sixteen.

We had to get on another train bound for Edmonton. You had to cook your meals on the train at that time, too. We arrived in Edmonton and all the baggage was left on the station platform for everybody to find their own trunks. We had a trunk stolen at the Edmonton station. They told us that our train was ready to leave, bound for the Peace River country. Dad asked at the station if they knew a place called Wembley and nobody ever heard of it. We wondered where they were putting us. We arrived at Wembley April 12, 1927.

My mother's sister, Mrs. D. MacNeill, was also on the train as we had left Scotland all together. Believe me, I'll never forget that trip from Wembley station. We had a real hard time as there was snow on the ground. A Mr. McLeod of the Soldier Settlement Board met us at the station. We had to all get into a wagon and my mother said she would not go in that contraption. He drove us up to what he called a farm - lots of bush, a barn, and a small house containing a stove, two beds, a wooden table and four chairs for the 13 of us! We had left a nice home back in Scotland.

We all worked hard on the farm, and then when my brothers went to look for work, there wasn't any money to pay anybody. I scrubbed clothes for 50¢ a day. You were lucky if they could pay you $5 a month.

My parents went back to Scotland, as father missed the sea. Dad left the farm to my brother Peter MacKenzie, youngest of the family. I stayed in Wembley to look after him with my sister Tina. War started and brothers Allan and Tom enlisted in the Canadian Army.

We had, I believe, better times then. We had learned through the hungry thirties or the depression to appreciate what we had.

All that's left of our family today are all the sisters and my brother, Tom, in England.

Mike Maloney

Mike came to Wembley in 1925 and ran the Alberta Pacific elevator, which had been built in late 1924 or early 1925. Jim Smith worked for him.

Mike first heard of the Peace in an old geography book he had looked in at his home near Peterborough, Ontario. Grande Prairie was just a mark on the map.

Mike moved to Spirit River, where he lived until passing away early this year, 1980 at the ripe age of 99 years and six months.

Charles Andrew Martin

Charles Martin was born December 1, 1882 in England. He served in the Royal Northwest Mounted Police from September 2, 1904 to September 1, 1912. He served in Canada, England and France with the 19th Canadian Corps Cavalry Regiment from August 11, 1914 to April 23, 1919.

Mr. Martin joined the Alberta Provincial Police as Constable on September 29, 1919, and continued serving the Royal Canadian Mounted Police when they absorbed the Provincial Force in April 1, 1932, having attained the rank of Corporal.

Constable Martin served with the Alberta Provincial Police at Wembley from late 1924 until Constable Edward Buchanan came in March 1925.

Corporal Martin was discharged with pension on March 31, 1933 at Edmonton, passing away there March 27, 1940.

The Gordon Mates Family

by Evelyn Mates

Gordon was born in Pierson, Manitoba in 1914 to parents Joan and Jack Mates. His dad joined the army and was in the First World War. Gordon and his mother went to Scotland to live so they would be nearer to his dad. They also had relatives there. While there another son Dennis was born, but shortly after, his mother died and also baby brother Dennis. An aunt took care of Gordon until the war was over and he and his dad moved to the Wembley District where his dad had a homestead. He stayed with his dad for a while, but stayed with his aunt and uncle, the Alex Muirs, most of the time. Aunt Katie, as he called his aunt, was like a mother to him.

When Gordon was in his twenty's, he worked for Herman Trelle, where he learned a lot about farming and how to get samples of grain ready to send to the World Fair. He joined the Royal Canadian Engineers in 1940 and served as a Sergeant until the war was over.

Gordon and I married in 1941 and lived in Pembrooke, Ontario, for six months until Gordon was sent overseas. When he returned after the war, we made our first home in Dimsdale, where he bought grain for the National Elevator. Later he was an elevator agent for the United Grain Growers. We lived in various towns - Hythe, Beaverlodge, Fairview, Sexsmith, and moved to Grande Prairie in 1969.

I was born at Huallen where my parents Thilda and Idan Thoreson farmed. We were a family of ten, seven girls and three boys. We played a lot of basketball and softball in our younger days. We also enjoyed going to all the dances.

Gordon and I have two sons, Gary and Donald. Gary works at City Hall in Grande Prairie. Donald is married and he and his wife Shirley have a son Bradley. Donald



Gordon and Evelyn Mates.

works at Cay Mechanical Ltd. The boys are both sports minded. They do a lot of curling and play ball.

Gordon and I always enjoyed doing various hobbies together. Gordon died August 6, 1971 at age 57. I still live in Grande Prairie.

The Matthews Family

by Harriett Dodge and Madeline Pawlowski

We arrived in Wembley the first week in July, 1926, from Spirit River, where our father, Matty, had been station agent on the Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia railroad. There were three children, Harriett, who became a school teacher; Buster, who was in the Air Force for five years and then in business; and Madeline, who became a nurse.

We moved to Wembley, so my father could get a better wage (on the same railroad), and we lived in the railroad station. I was in grade eight, Buster in six, and Madeline in four.

One of our teachers was Mrs. Stobie, and I think that the other was Margaret McNaught. I particularly remember her because every Friday afternoon, the last half hour, she would read us a story. The one I remember was the story of a wolf named Kazan. We always sat very quietly until the bell rang. Some of the names of the pupils that I can remember were Wilson, Jack Rogers, whose father was the pharmacist, Ross Dancey, (his father was the butcher), the Bromley boys, (their father was in the lumber yard), Ida McDougall, now living in Victoria, B.C., and the Stokke girls. Dinty Moore had the livery stable; their children were too young to be in school. We did our shopping at the Kranz store, just across on the corner from the station.

As we only lived in Wembley a short time, we didn't get too well acquainted. We went to Sunday School, and I can remember going to the Wapiti for picnics and swimming, also to Lake Saskatoon. Most of such trips were with the ball team.

I can remember that we were always wakened at daybreak, summer and winter by the braying of a donkey, across the tracks from the station. I remember too that every Saturday, Mother drove us to Grande Prairie to have a piano lesson from a Mrs. Smart. It was quite an effort for the old car to climb back up the Richmond hill.

The summer of 1927, we moved to McLennan, where Dad became truck dispatcher on the railroad, and also so I could go to high school.

We lived there such a short time, and we were not very old, so it has been difficult to recall too much. We have always been very proud to have been a part of the Peace River country early days.

Mother died in 1963, Dad in 1967, Buster in 1972.

The Mark McConaghy Family

Mark and Alma McConaghy moved to Wembley in 1956 from Debolt. At that time, there were three children; Marilyn 15 years, Gerald 10 years, and Murray 10 months. Mark worked in the oilfields south of the Wapiti, so Wembley seemed like a more central location.

They purchased a house belonging to Mrs. Perdue, who was very attached to it as it had many family memories for her. She was a sweet, kind person. Mark had various jobs, one of which was working as second man for Einer Grimsrud at United Grain Growers. Gerald's song in the Wembley school paper was "My Old Man's a Dustman". Mark also unloaded coal from railcars, replaced street light bulbs, was caretaker of the curling rink, and was United Church janitor. It was sometimes difficult for Mrs. Edgar or Mrs. Bunyan to play the organ, as it was cold in the church during the winter months and it took a long time to warm up when Mark was late starting the fires.

In March of 1957, the McConaghy family was blessed with a set of twins; Donna and Donald. On April 9, 1958, Marilyn married Stanley Nickel, son of Louise and Nat Nickel, who at that time owned the Wembley Hotel.

That spring, Wembley was installing water and sewer lines and the streets were impassable. Elmer Ford had to pull the wedding car through the mud with a tractor. Alma attended her daughter's wedding pregnant with what was to be the last McConaghy. In May, when it was time to go to the hospital, Alma hitched a ride with a friend. Her car broke down on the way there, so Alma ultimately had to stand on the side of the highway hitchhiking for a ride. She made it in plenty of time to Beaverlodge Hospital, where Maureen was born. Now the family was complete. The set up was similar to an assembly line in that old house in Wembley with four little youngsters all within a couple of years of each other.

Gerald was a big help to his mom being the oldest left at home and Alma having four small children. He had his first job at the Wembley Department Store.



Marilyn, Gerald, Mark, Donna, Donald, Alma and Murray McConaghy.

McConaghy's were always fond of animals so had several dogs that created problems with other people. They also had a pet goat that used to climb on the small Volkswagon plus eat clothes off the clothesline, to mention a few of its tricks.

In 1962, the McConaghy family moved up the LaGlace road onto Grimsrud's farm. They remained active in Wembley activities always. One year later, another move put them on Clubine's old farm, four miles east of Wembley, where they stayed until 1971. All the McConaghy children attended Wembley school at one time or another. In 1971, Alma and the four younger children moved to Grande Prairie.

Right now Mark lives in Kelowna, B.C., Alma in Grande Prairie, Marilyn and family in Whitehorse, Yukon, while Gerald is a teacher outside Edmonton. Murray lives and works in Edmonton, Donna and Donald live and work in Grande Prairie and Maureen, married to Fred (Ted) Metituk, lives in Wembley.

Harry McGill

by Mrs. Agnes (Watson) Campbell

Harry was born in County Down, Ireland and came to Canada about 1913. At that time, he was the only one of his family living. He made his home at John Watson's in Edmonton, Mrs. Watson being his Aunt Jane. When Dad and the boys were going to the Peace Country he decided to go too, and homesteaded just north of the Wembley Lake. It was later sold to James Smith.

Harry joined the army in Grande Prairie in the 66th Battalion and served about three or four years. He was a small man and had a loud voice and could command a regiment, so was made a Corporal. He was killed in action when he was passing out rations at the front lines. A shell killed him instantly, about two weeks before Armistice.

When Bert Watson went overseas years after, he looked up Harry's grave where hundreds of crosses were, in France. He took a picture of it.

The G.W. (Bill) McIntosh Family

by Marjorie (Feist) McIntosh

In May of 1942 I married a Cereal, Alberta man, Bill McIntosh, while we were both working at Fleet Aircraft Ltd. in Ontario.

In June of 1944, we went home to Wembley to visit Mom and Dad Feist with our new son, Ted, who was then three months old.

That fall we lost my mom to cancer. Bill and I stayed on and bought the farm, known as the old Squire's Farm, from my Dad. It was located just north of the Wembley elevators.

We lived in the Wheat Pool house with Dad and my sister Vera for a year or better. In the meantime, we bought the old Cook or Oxley warehouse from Cook's store in town, moved it to the farm, and proceeded to turn it into a house. We moved into it unfinished and found out what cold weather was all about in the Peace River country, trying to keep warm with mostly green poplar.

Our twins Pat and Pam were born in the Beaverlodge Hospital in March of 1949. We had no car so Bill Palmer, an old timer many will remember kindly, drove us up to Beaverlodge.

Bill and I ran the Wembley dairy for awhile. We bought it from Bob Coe. Those were the days of milking, washing, and bottling all by yourselves.

We then rented our farm for three years, sold our cattle to Vic Elford and went to Spirit River to help run a dairy farm.

We spent a few months in Cereal and a year in Ontario. We returned to Wembley in 1952. Bill spent the winter in the bush across the Wapiti logging with Percy Elliot for Kopp's sawmill until spring planting time.

We farmed the home quarter and a quarter section directly north of Jim Smith's until leaving the Peace.

In 1956, we had an auction sale. We sold our west quarter to Bob Coe, who still farms it, and our home quarter to Dave Cochrane.

We then moved to Ontario where Bill still works at Fleet Aircraft Ltd. as a plant superintendent in Fort Erie. Our son Ted is married and has two girls. He is a graduate of Guelph University in Plant Science and is with the Department of Agriculture at Milton, Ontario. Both of our girls are graduates of Guelph, Pat in Fine Arts and Pam in Physical Education and Science. Pat is married to Corporal Frank Allison, who is with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police at Whitehorse. Pam teaches High School at North Bay, Ontario.

We bought a small farm at Ridgeway, Ontario, on moving back east and we still live there.

The Noel McLean Family

I was born at Tisdale in northeastern Saskatchewan in the fall of 1908. When my folks sold the farm in the spring of 1925 and moved with my younger sister to Beaverdell, B.C. where they got interested in mining, I went to Renfrew, Ontario, where I stayed for a year. In the spring of 1926, I followed the folks to Beaverdell. After working in sawmills and a box factory for a spell, I got a job with the Canadian Pacific Railway at Nelson, B.C. in the roundhouse. It was from there in April 1927, I took off with my mother and dad for destination Wembley, Alberta, end of steel. After a rollicking ride on the ED and BC Railway from Edmonton we arrived at Wembley. We stayed at the Wembley Hotel, at that time owned by people by the name of Lord. The first night I was in a room with four other men, two of whom I remember their names as I got to know them well. They were Reg Baird and Jack Abel.

The next day Dad purchased some lots and began preparations to build a house. During our visits to the lumber yard for material we got to know the manager, Bert Bromley quite well and inside of a month I was working as second man in the lumber yard. Bert quit the lumber yard that fall and built a hardware store on main street, which was later sold to Bunyan and Elliott.



1928 Howard Russel, Roland Porche, and Noel McLean.

In April 1928, I was sent to Beaverlodge to take over a stock of Lee Borden's spruce lumber, which was piled behind Gaudins store on the hill in the old town. I was there less than a month, just had a small office and warehouse built with the able assistance of Jack Johnson. From there I went back to Wembley as manager of that branch where I remained until the fall of 1941, when I joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. During the time I was at Wembley, as it was during the "Good Old" Depression days, I took on various sidelines, selling insurance, school secretary and Massey Harris agent to mention a few.

When World War II was over, so were my days in Wembley, as the company had closed the lumber yard six months after I left, and it never re-opened. Having disposed of most of my connections at Wembley and getting rid of the rest I moved to Grande Prairie in the spring of 1946 where the lumber company had offered me a position as Superintendent. First it was the Frontier Lumber, and later the name was changed to Beaver Lumber. I was on that job until the summer of 1961 when a big shuffle in the company took place. I went to Beaverlodge, where I ran the yard until the fall of 1965. Then they moved me, as purchasing agent, to Prince George, B.C. where I remained until I retired in 1973.

While at Wembley I married Rhea Chambers on December 25, 1929. Rhea came over the Edson Trail in 1912 with her parents, Dan and Bertha Chambers and brother, Ted. They settled in the Two Rivers area, south of Beaverlodge. We had two children, a boy and a girl. Raymond the oldest is now owner of two United Auto Parts stores, one in Barrhead, where he and his wife Carolyn live, and the other at Westlock. Their two sons are each managing a branch known by the business name of McLean Distributors.

Our daughter Shirley is married to the son of a well-known old time family in Grande Prairie where she lives. His name is Bill Littleton. They have three sons. The oldest, Greg, is employed by Dowell of Canada. The second boy, Brent, is working for Alberta Government Telephones, and Murray is still in school. Bill, an electrician, is regional supervisor in charge of electrical maintenance in all Alberta Government buildings.

I am now making my home in the Okanagan near Kelowna, where the winters are much less severe than the Peace River ones.

The Robert McLean Family

Hannah and Robert and son, Noel, arrived in Wembley in April of 1927, via the ED and BC Railway. Originally from Tisdale, Saskatchewan, and most recently from Beaverdell, B.C., the train trip took three days. It was made in comparative comfort when compared to those who came earlier over the Edson and Athabasca Trails.

Robert was a very competent bookkeeper and handy as a carpenter. He was noted for building cupboards and cane chairs.

Hannah was extremely active in the Ladies Aid and Women's Missionary Society of the United Church, she also was in charge of the cradle roll.

Robert McLean passed away on October 16, 1940 at 71 years of age.

Mrs. Hannah McLean passed away on July 20, 1957 at 86½ years of age.

Both are buried at the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery.

The Bill McRae Family

William John McRae (born in 1901) of Inverness, Scotland, first learned of the Peace River Country from local newspaper advertisements persuading people to immigrate to Canada. Herman Trelle's picture, (World Wheat King of those times) was used to promote the virtues of farming here.

First Bill came to Indian Head, Saskatchewan, in 1922 and five years later, he travelled by rail into the Peace. He homesteaded in the Aspen Ridge district, and in 1929 went to work for Hugh Allen.

In 1931, Bill married Martha, daughter of Frank and Johanna Dombrova, who had immigrated from their home province of Pommern, now in East Germany.

In 1934, Bill and Martha's first son Robert (Bobby) Duncan was born and in 1938, their second son Donald (Donnie) Frank arrived.



Bobby, Bill, Martha and Donnie McRae.

Bill and Martha worked for Hugh Allen until 1944, then moved to NE 28-71-8-W6 near Pete and Mac Cameron, and Rehaume's. Having purchased SE 21-71-8-W6 in 1944, they moved there in 1945. Their closest neighbours were the Pete MacKenzies and Councillor Jim Smith family. They sold to Werner Stamp in 1969, and continued to live there before retiring to Grande Prairie in the spring of 1970.

In 1976, Bobby retired from the Canadian Forces to farm near Renfrew, Ontario. He and his wife, Dorothy, have three sons, William John, David Wayne, and Jamey Michael, and one daughter Debra Lori.

Donnie, sheet metallist and resident of Grande Prairie, is married to the former Kay Allen of Bezanson. They have two sons, Donald Allen, and Terry William and one daughter, Nancy Lynn.

Bill passed away June 2, 1975. Martha lives near family and friends in Grande Prairie.

Jacob and Julia Miller

Jacob, Julia and family lived in Stony Plain, Alberta. Jacob owned and operated a store there. He decided he would like to try farming, as he enjoyed the outdoors.

Thinking the railroad would run from Spirit River to Dawson Creek, Jacob looked at land around Rolla, B.C., so he would be close for hauling grain. The railroad went south from Rycroft to Grande Prairie, however, so Jacob came to Wembley, and Lorne Purves' land was for sale.

He went back to Stony Plain, sold his store, moved his wife and eight children; Margaret, Jack, Martha, Dorothy, Alfred, George, Ben, and Robert, to Wembley

in 1928, one mile from town, where they lived in a log house. Two daughters remained in Stony Plain. Theresa married and lived there. Julia was married and made her home in Red Deer. Robert died of pneumonia and is buried in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery.



Jacob and Julia Miller, 1938.

Jacob bought two tractors in Wembley. When hard times came in the 1930's, he had to use horses except on the threshing machine. In 1938, Elmer Anderson came to the farm and rebuilt the house into a two story house that still stands on the farm today. With horses, he cleared the remaining brush from the section of land he owned. Jacob planted a hedge of trees around their home. The trees were watered by his sons after school, the water being hauled from the lake by horses in barrels on a stone boat.

Margaret, a legal stenographer, worked for Joseph Archer and Mel Howey in Wembley and Beaverlodge. She married Albert Parry of Wembley and had two sons. One son passed away at an early age. Albert died in 1957. Margaret and her other son Robert moved to Grande Prairie. She died in 1973 and is buried in St. Johns Lutheran Cemetery.

Jack married Doris (Toots) Boyd of Wembley. They lived at Huallen. Jack was a grain buyer for the United Grain Growers elevator. Later on Jack and his family of seven children moved to the farm to help his Dad and Mother with the farming. They left the farm in 1961 and moved to Grande Prairie. Jack passed away on August 31, 1974 and is buried in St. Johns Lutheran Cemetery.

Martha was employed by Bob Kranz in the Telephone office switch board and Drug Store. She married Dan Paul of Wembley. They farmed in the Aspen Ridge district, raised two children, one boy and one girl. They moved to Grande Prairie and Dan worked for Horne and Pitfield for 34 years. They are now retired in Grande Prairie.

Dorothy went to Calgary and stayed with her sister, Theresa, took a business course, then joined the American Red Cross. There she met and married Bill Barber. They moved to Missouri, United States. Dorothy and her two daughters returned to Grande Prairie where she is employed at Alberta Power.

Alfred, George, and Ben joined the armed forces and served overseas. After returning, Alfred and George bought a truck and hauled gravel and lumber.

Alfred married Viola Willsey of Aspen Dale, raised two girls. He worked at oil rigs, while living in Wembley. George sold their truck and went to work at Anderson's saw mill in Wembley. He married Dorothy Grubb of Aspen Dale. They have no children. They moved to Grande Prairie and he was employed at McGavins, and is now presently employed at the Grande Prairie Regional College.

Ben, being single, lives a short distance out of Quesnel, B.C. along side the river, and works his claims near Barkerville, B.C.

The Miller children attended school in Wembley, skated on the lake and played hockey. They donated a set of curling rocks to the Wembley Curling Club where they curled. The family attended church at St. John's Lutheran west of Wembley.

Julia belonged to the Ladies Aid. She loved to walk, often walking four to six miles to their meetings if the men were working in the field. Julia kept busy with her children and enjoyed them. After they grew up, she looked forward to them returning home to the farm on Sundays and holidays. Jacob and Julia bought a house in Grande Prairie in 1961 and retired from the farm. Jacob passed away in 1962 at the age of 83. He was buried in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery. Alfred, Viola and family then moved to Grande Prairie and lived with his mother. He still works for Canfor Sawmills.

Julia passed away in 1972 at the age of 86. She is buried in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery. The farm was then sold to Otto Kirscht.

Alex and Pauline Mitchell

Alex Mitchell was transferred to Wembley in August of 1928 by the Canadian Bank of Commerce. The manager was H.T. Lamont. In May of 1929, Alex was transferred to Pouce Coupe to the bank there, where he remained until 1947.

Pauline Mitchell trained as a nurse in Winnipeg General Hospital. She graduated in 1931, and moved in January of 1932 to Arras, B.C. where her parents were homesteading 20 miles west of Dawson Creek.

We were married in Pouce Coupe in December 1935, and our four children were born there.

In November 1947, we bought the retail business owned and operated by Robert Kranz. Thora, Bryce, and Kent attended school in Wembley.

The family moved to Edmonton in the fall of 1951, to be near the University. Mr. G. Rautenstrauch managed the business for us until July, 1954, when the store was sold.

Thora is now Mrs. Jerry Howell and lives at Nanaimo, B.C. Bryce, Kent, and Gail all live in Edmonton.

The first social event Alex remembers was the wedding of Jim and Mona Smith in the fall of 1928. The first major event was the building of the first curling rink in Wembley, also in the fall of 1928.

The R.D. Moore Family

Robert Drysdale Moore arrived in the Wembley area, in the early 1920's with little more than his wife Agnes, twin daughters, Margaret and Dorothy, and a white goat called Nanny. He worked on the railroad and at the Round House. Later, he had his own dray delivery, driving the most beautiful horses in the area. Mrs. Finch ran a boarding house in those early days. She gave Bob the nickname of Dinty Moore (after the comic book character), and it stayed with him the rest of his days.

Nanny, the white goat, was as popular as Dinty. On occasion she was known to drink beer in the pub with him, and staggered right along home behind him. As he drayed around the small town he was always accompanied by the blond-haired twins and old Nanny. Nanny was the mascot for the hockey team, she often spent some time on the ice, dressed in her finery, usually women's clothing.

Dinty was a horse man; he broke them for driving or riding. One time he was working with a race horse. The horse threw him, he wasn't badly injured, but was in bed for a short time. That horse was given the name of "Go to bed".

Dinty and Agnes had two more daughters born while living in Wembley, then they moved on to Hythe and from there to Hays, B.C. (which was renamed Gundy after the railroad went through) on July 12, 1930. They had nine children, five girls and four boys. Today there are eight of their children, 29 grandchildren and 29 great grandchildren, living in the area.

Bill Moss

William Richard Moss came on the first train to Spirit River in 1916. This was as far as the steel had been laid then.

Bill homesteaded on land near Beaverlodge before moving to Wembley where he built and operated a blacksmith shop.

He married Margaret Russell, January 3, 1934, and built a nice four room stucco house that same year.

Some of their neighbours were: Matt Graham, Slim Finch, Ivor Larson, Wallace Edgar, Hugh Dool, Bill Palmer and there were many more.

They sold out and left Wembley in 1939. Bill passed away at Langley, B.C. on October 9, 1974.

The R.E. Newcom Family

by Hazel Newcom

In 1912, the C.H. Simmonds family moved from North Dakota to take up a homestead on the prairie of Alberta east of Pollockville, about fifty miles north of Brooks, (the drought area, they found out too late). There were five children then, and one born later. One of the girls of this family, Hazel attended the Calgary Normal School and taught school in the district for six years. She married Bob Newcom in 1935.

Robert Newcom had come to the Pollockville district in 1909 with his parents and two brothers. They lived west of the town. Bob went to Olds Agricultural School (Olds College) and then in 1933, he was hired by the Alberta Pacific Grain Company to handle their grain elevator in Pollockville. In the fall of 1934, they sent him to Sexsmith to help until the next spring when the Alberta Pacific Grain Company put him in charge of their business in Wembley. That same summer, in August, he went back south to get his bride, Hazel Simmonds.

This was a very memorable trip. The Slave Lake and river were in flood at the time. Hazel describes the journey like this; When we arrived at the flooded area, we put our coupe on a scow along with another car with a young man going to Grande Prairie on business. We travelled about six miles on the scow, then were put off onto the road when it re-appeared. We travelled about 12 miles and the road again disappeared. There were already ten cars waiting there for the other larger scow which had broken down, to add a bit of color and excitement to the trip. It was three days before the scow came to take us all off our enforced adventure island. Most of the people had little food, but we were prepared and were able to feed the young man who had embarked with us. He was very grateful and offered his two seat car for us to sleep in and he used our coupe, which we gladly accepted. The scow finally showed up on the evening of the third day and worked all night. It's hard to imagine how.

It was daybreak of the fourth morning when our turn came. The trees and tops of buildings stood out above the water faintly, like ghosts, in the early morning mist. It was like travelling in a fantasy land. After nine miles on this scow, dodging the trees and fence posts, we were put off onto the road again. We arrived in Wembley after dark that evening in August, and I was turned around in my directions all the years we lived in Wembley.



Hazel and Bob Newcom, 1938.

For about three years, I was scared to death of the roads every time it rained, as they were pretty rugged at that time. I thought if we slipped off the road, we would go out of sight literally. But we soon took roots, and lived in Wembley for 18½ years until Bob was transferred to Grande Prairie.

We acquired many good friends in those early years; the P. Rainers, the Stokke family, Noel McLeans, Mitchells, and C. Johnsons were especially close friends. We have many happy memories of those days.

While in Wembley, we were active in community activities. Bob was on the council and was mayor of the town for some time: I was instrumental in promoting and forming the first library in Wembley. The town council permitted their small meeting rooms to be used as the library. The helpers were volunteers. Much water has gone under the bridge since then.

In the spring of 1938, our son Reg was born. Five years later, we adopted a baby girl. We moved into the Herman Trelle house, which we bought three years later. The children went to school in Wembley and Grande Prairie. Later they spent a year in college at Lacombe. Reg spent a year in Alberta College in Edmonton, then went to the University of Alberta.

In 1958, Bob's health was very poor, so he gave up buying grain when Alex Mitchell asked him to come to Edmonton to help him in the Pan American Motel.

After two years in Edmonton, we bought a summer resort at Sorrento on the Shuswap Lake, B.C. Velma Lee went to the United States where she went to college and married while down there. She is married to Dr. C.L. Hibbard. His work is in Portland but they live near Woodburn. They have four children.

Reg married an air line stewardess, just after his twenty seventh birthday, in Edmonton. He has recently bought a partnership in an insurance company in Calgary.

While we were in Grande Prairie, I was asked to go back to teaching. I continued teaching in Edmonton and in B.C. after we moved out here until I retired six years ago. When we sold the summer resort, Bob went into construction until he retired. We built our own home near beautiful Kalamalka Lake where we now live.

The Grande Prairie and district people who live around here arranged a picnic last June (Father's Day) at the Government Camp ground at Mara Lake (south of Sicamous). There were 65 people there. We organized and plan to have a picnic each year on Father's Day at the same place. So if any of you folks from the north are in the area on that day, do come and join us.

The Nickel Family

by Louise Nickel

In November 1944, Nathan and I thought we would take a trip to the Peace River country for our first holiday, with neighbors Burl and Una Hemphill, and Martin Hein. We had to have our gas and tire coupons as both were rationed at that time. We sold our half section of land and were looking for a new place to live. Travelling on Highway Two, our first stop was High Prairie before travelling on to Spirit River where we knew the hotel owner, Jim and Julia Popel. They told us hotel business was very good. Our third stop was Dawson Creek at the Palace Hotel. We got very little sleep that night. The bonspiel was on and the curlers were re-curling their games using the hallways as the curling rink and whiskey and beer bottles for the rocks. Grande Prairie was our next stop where we spent a cold night at the Murray Hotel. We went back to High Prairie before heading home, one mile east and four miles north of Waskatenau.

We liked the Peace River country so in December, 1944, Nathan went back by train (Northern Alberta Railways) to look for a hotel; there were three available, Sexsmith, Bluesky, and Wembley. On March 1, 1945 we bought the Wembley Hotel from Lorne Purves because the village had a good high school for our family and plenty of soft water. We were in the hotel business for 22 years selling out to Nick Kolybaba on March 1, 1967 and retiring in Devon.



Wembley hotel.

There were six children in our family - Walter and family live in Olds, Edward and family live in Devon, Willard and family live in Westlock, Audrey and family live in Debolt, Stan and family live in Whitehorse, Violet and family live in Spruce Grove.

Nathan passed away in Devon, November 29, 1975 and I moved to Meadowcraft Senior Citizens home in November, 1979, and like living there very much.

Maurice Ouimet Story

by Maurice Ouimet

Harry Swift was one of the early agents for the Northern Alberta Railway in Wembley. As it was a large business centre at that time, many carloads of settlers effects arrived on most freight trains.

Clark McCombs was another agent, who came in the forties. He had an assistant who stuttered as well as Clark. One day a customer came in who stuttered bad. The customer was very angry because he thought Clark and his assistant were making fun of his stutter.

Then came Vic Spurgeon who was agent from 1946-1956. Vic was very active in the pulpwood business while in Wembley.

I was agent 1956-1967 and probably saw the greatest change. The stock yards were taken down for good and a new loading platform was built. The water system was installed in 1957. The winter of 1959, the old coal burning furnace was replaced by a modern oil furnace. In 1960 the last steam locomotive was replaced by diesel.

The first couple of winters, (1956-1958) I was in Wembley, a hockey team was hurriedly assembled, thanks to Wallace Edgar who one day drove up to LaGlace and informed them that Wembley hockey team were coming up on Sunday afternoon to play. On being informed of this, I immediately started phoning around. Many of us had only a pair of skates, so off we go to Bunyan's Hardware for some horse collar pads. (Cleaned 'em out).

Can't remember winning a game but sure had fun. Louis Cowpar was appointed coach (no contract). I remember one night we played La Glace and we had 28 players. Poor Louis was going nuts because everyone wanted to play. One of our big events was to play in the arena at Grande Prairie in the semi-finals. Imagine being in the semi-finals after losing all our games.

Some of our players were Wally and Don Hawkes, Don Noyes, Bill and Bobby Thomson, Duncan McNeill, Wolfe Rautenstrauch, Harry Patrick, Billy Anderson, Walt Nickel, Dale Chambers, Maurice Ouimet, Billy Campbell, Don Murphy, Henry and Colin Hrychiw, Jim Anderson, Herbie Cowpar, Dale and Ray Stokke, Don Toews, and his cousin, a big curly haired guy. Henry Wiens was our goalie.

In 1960 I remember going to a council meeting and asking for a new skating rink. Council told me to come up with a plan so I hurriedly came up with a drawing of a rink complete with building, dressing rooms, etc. It was built that fall.

I was coach of the baseball team in the late 1950's and always remember a young lad attending every game tossing a baseball. One time I played him and he turned out to be quite a ball player. Dale Stokke later played on the Canada team in Japan.

I was a member of the Fire Department. During my time I saw a big improvement of equipment from hand pushed rig to a modern fire truck.

I was a member of the Wembley Whirlers square dance club. I still have my badges. That great fellow Frank Stoll and his wife Irene started out our club along with Pete and Phyllis Sebastian. Our caller, Frank Dorward, and his fine lady, Dorothy, gave us many hours of enjoyment.

When I came to Wembley in 1956, May 1, there was a lot doing. Pete Christofferson's Pool Room was bursting at the seams on Saturday nights. Nickel's Pub was packed with jolly makers. Archie MacGregor's meat market was busy. Bunyan's Hardware was a great place for the late story tellers. You could always find Justyn Rigby there.

In 1958 a young entrepreneur from Spirit River came to town. Doug Keown, Mary, and Donna, and did a lot for Wembley.

I was Secretary Treasurer of the Village from April, 1961 until April, 1967. A great experience. I was proud to be a part of the Village.

The early 1960's brought television to our area (canned from Dawson Creek). Everyone had high antennaes atop their residence. Some of us got a cold, wet and sore butt from sitting on snow covered roof peaks installing antennaes around town.

One of my daily visitors was Jake Stegmeier, a great old timer who had come to homestead in Southwest of Wembley. Jake loved to talk of the early days, as when he and his brother would walk from the homestead to Edson to catch the train for Edmonton. On one such trip they stopped to rest, took off their felt hats and leather shoes. In the morning they awoke to find the rabbits had eaten the brim of their hats and tops of their shoes. At age 77 Jake could still stand on his head. He was very agile.

Alfretta and I had six children: Jacqueline (Jacki) married David (Joe) Eager. Jacki and Joe live at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and have two boys and one girl.

George married Judy Franklin. They have one boy and one girl and live at Surrey, B.C.

Leroy married Darlene Warren. They have no children and live in Grande Prairie.

Darcy and Laurie are not married and live in Grande Prairie.

Colleen married Tim Wiemken and lives in Grande Prairie.

Alfretta now lives at Duncan, B.C. and I am at Burnaby, B.C.

The Bill Palmer Family

by Babs Hulet

Daddy, William (Bill) D. Palmer, was born December 4, 1884 at Treherne, Manitoba. He came to Wembley in 1928, where he was the agent for B.A. Oil, International Harvester, and managed the livestock yards, and the dairy for a number of years.

My mother, Gladys Ione Simpson (nee Fisher), who was divorced, came with her daughter Ella, in the early 1930's, to be housekeeper for Bill Moss. Daddy and Mom were married shortly after.

I, Isabelle (Babs) Annie Palmer was born in November 1933 in Edmonton. Billie Joe Palmer was born March 3, 1939.

Ella married Herb Gitzel and had two boys, Preston and Van. They were divorced in the 1940's.

I, Babs, married Lewis William Hulet in Salmon Arm in 1951. We have four children; one son, and three daughters; and four grandchildren. We live at Quesnel, B.C.

Billie Joe was married December 26, 1970 in Dawson Creek. They have two daughters and now live at Revelstoke, B.C.

Daddy passed away December 30, 1949 and Mom at Nelson, B.C. September 13, 1965. The Herald Tribune of January 4, 1950 reported:

"W.D. "Bill" Palmer of Wembley has been called by the Grim Reaper. The people of Wembley were shocked to hear of the death of their longstanding neighbour last Friday afternoon, when he collapsed while walking back toward town from a stalled car through the cold and severe weather."

"Friends had noticed Mr. Palmer failing for some time, but his death came as a sharp blow to those who knew him best."

"Bill was an ardent curler and a true sport on the ice. He was known in his community as a staunch friend who



Billie Palmer, Mr. Palmer, Ella Gitzel, and Babs Palmer.

was dependable and available in any emergency. His neighbours feel Mr. Palmer has left a vacancy which cannot be refilled."

The people of the South Wapiti district remember Bill as a good friend, who always had a big kettle of soup or stew on the back of the stove. They could eat there when they came to town for 25¢ a meal, and stay over night for $1. Like most people in those days, they had little money and could not afford to stay at a hotel.

The William Paul Family

by Anne Paul

Bill came out to Canada, with his parents, Daniel and Helen Paul, five brothers and two sisters from Red Mill, East Whitburn, Scotland, to Wembley in the year 1927 to look for work.

His first year he worked for Bill Watson. Then his Dad and himself went to work for Bill Liberty, south of Beaverlodge for two years, to buy grain to start farming on their farm one mile south of Wembley.

His dad drove the school van from Wembley to Klondike trail, taking the children to the school at Wembley. His mum was a great worker with the United Church Ladies Aid.

Bill went to work at LaGlace for Mr. Harvey till 1941. When his dad passed away, he came home to run his mum's farm and his own across the road. He also worked for 11 years, summer and fall, at Anderson's Saw Mill.

In the year 1949 his mum passed away. Bill still farmed till 1959 when he moved to Grande Prairie with his wife, two sons and one daughter.

He sold his farm to Mr. John Ditters, and went to work for Canfor till 1971 when he retired and enjoyed a couple of years visiting friends till he passed away in 1974.

The Cecil Penney Family

I, Cecil Frederick Penney, was born in England, and came to Canada in 1919, settling at Spirit River. I married Kathleen E. Walton on June 11, 1930, and lived in my first home in the Aspen Dale district. We had three children; Joan, Mary and Lawrence.

My brother, Ronald, and I farmed together until I joined the army in 1940. Two years after I joined the army, Kathleen and the children moved to Wembley where we are still residing. After five years, the war was over, and I returned home and found work clerking for R. Kranz and A.W. Mitchell, later working for the South Wapiti Lumber Company. In the summer I worked at Grande Prairie doing carpentry. In the winter for South Wapiti Lumber Company piling lumber. In 1952, I became Post Master at Wembley until I retired February 23, 1973.

Joan passed away in 1968. Mary married Bryce Campbell who was born in Ireland and came to Canada in 1922. They have three children; Lyle, Sandra, and Colleen. Lyle married Barbara Grotkowski (oldest daughter of John and Elvera) and they have two girls; Alpha-Dawn and Casi-Anne, and are living in Wembley. Sandra married Milton Cameron Campbell (third oldest son of Leland and Margaret) and they have two girls, Amber and Kori, and are also living in Wembley. Colleen is still at home going to high school.

For the first two years after Bryce married Mary, he hauled water for oil rigs at Valleyview. Then worked for the Government hauling pavement for the highways. In the winter he skidded logs in the bush for North Canadian Forest Industries. In 1960, he worked at Bunyans Hardware and drove school bus until he moved to Halcourt and farmed for John Bunyan. In August 1966, he moved back to Wembley and started janitoring at the Wembley School in January of 1967. Mary was part-time assistant at the Wembley Post Office from 1972 until May, 1979.

Lawrence's first job after he finished school was at Scott Fruit Company. Later he worked for Poole Construction as time keeper until he went to The Pas, Manitoba, to work for Stan Reed, an accountant. Lawrence married Bernice Papika, who he met at The Pas. They have two children; Dawn and Gary. Dawn is in Junior High and Gary is in Elementary school. Later they moved to Edmonton, then Sherwood Park where they are still residing.

The Perdue Family

Agnes Okonski was born in Poland in 1905 and came to Canada when she was 20 years old.

She married Pete Perdue and they lived at Pemukan in the Coronation area, where twin sons, Don and Fred, and daughter, Sheilia, were born. They moved to the Halcourt district where they farmed until Pete's death in 1938. Agnes and her family then came to Wembley in 1939.

Don and Fred had started school at Halcourt and were in grade two when they started Wembley School.

While attending school, Fred worked for Bob Kranz in his department store on Saturdays and after school. He also continued to work there when Alex Mitchell purchased the store. Some of his many duties included sweeping floors, shovelling snow, filling shelves, and help keep the furnace going.

Don worked for Bob Kranz and then for McCordick butcher shop on his days off from school.

Both Don and Fred were active in such sports as hockey, ball, curling, and badminton.

Don and Fred graduated from high school in Wembley. In 1951 Don went to Vancouver. Fred and Don went on a two and a half month trip through California. Upon returning, Fred was employed in Edmonton and Don joined the Armed Forces, "Queens Own Rifles". He served one and a half years in Korea and was then stationed in Victoria (for the rest of his time in the services).

Don attended the University of B.C. for a short time in the faculty of pharmacy. He was married in Vancouver to Jean Lennox, a girl from Scotland. They had a son, Daryll, and a daughter, Jackie. Jean and Jackie were in a fatal accident in Delta not far from their home. Don and Daryll are still residing in Delta where Don is employed with B.C. ambulance.

Fred married Lorraine Cook from Beaverlodge. They lived in Dawson Creek where Fred was a salesman for the Royal Fruit Wholesale and later for Northern Gas Propane, who transferred them to Fort St. John in 1958. Fred and Lorraine have lived in Abbotsford, Nanaimo and Edmonton where he was employed by Blue Flame Propane. In 1972, they came back to the Peace country and reside in Grande Prairie where Fred is employed by Northwestern Utilities. They have a daughter, Donlea, and a son, Marten. Donlea is married to Gerald Moison from Edmonton. They have a son and a daughter. Gerald works for Proctor and Gamble at Grande Prairie. Marten took one year at the Grande Prairie College and plans to

attend the University of Alberta for a degree in engineering.

Sheilia graduated from Wembley High School, then moved to Dawson Creek. She married Constable Jack Grabowski and they moved to Kamloops, B.C. They were stationed in the Baffin Islands for two years also in Fort Simpson, N.W.T., and in Calgary. Sheilia has one son, Fred, who graduated from high school in 1979. He is now employed with a logging company on Vancouver Island. Sheilia works as receptionist for a medical clinic in Surrey, B.C.

Agnes Perdue had many friends in Wembley. She was well known for the delicious rosettes she would make, she kept busy with her family.

The family attended both the United and Anglican churches depending on which one was active.

In 1961 Sheilia persuaded her mother to move to Kamloops to be with her. She is now living in her own home in Vancouver.

The family has many fond memories of their lives in Wembley.



A graduation dance in Wembley last Friday night honored Don Perdue, the school's only graduate for 1951. Don, who plans to make a trip to California, is seen above in the classroom with the principal, Mrs. E.A. Storm. (Herald-Tribune Staff Photo).

Pitchko Brothers

In the summer of 1927, Andrew, Felix, and Tom Pitchko accompanied by Frank Fry, drove up to Wembley, Alberta from Bruno, Saskatchewan, in a model T. Ford to look over the country. Andrew and Felix sold their farm in Saskatchewan, and in the spring of 1928, moved to Wembley which was then the end of the steel.

Upon arrival, they decided not to go farming, but were going to try the garage business instead, as Felix was a good mechanic. They bought Jerry Beegan's garage and Dinty Moore's two storey house with an acreage that bordered on a slough.

The main reason that they moved was so Andrew's children would be closer to a school. In November, Mrs. Andrew Pitchko came to Wembley with their five children; Roman, Magdaline, Arthur, Blanche, and Mabel. The train was so crowded with new settlers that Mrs. Pitchko had to sit on her suitcase in the aisle and hold Mabel, who was a baby six months old. Some kind passengers helped look after the other four youngsters. Arthur wandered away in Edmonton when they were changing trains and got lost which caused some excitement.

Pitchko Brothers sold Essex cars, Union gas and oil, Marconi radios, and took the Massey-Harris agency in 1934. During the depression years, they didn't always get paid in cash but traded meat, vegetables, and firewood ($2.00 a load) on accounts. Some bills were never paid.

Andrew loved baseball and organized a team. On Sundays, they would play at different points, and there was always a good noisy crowd watching. The kids played softball, basketball on an outdoor court at the school, curled, played badminton in the Town Hall, went sleigh riding on the hills at Taylor's farm, swimming, and berry picking at Lake Saskatoon Island. Roman and Art played hockey and we were all very excited when the games were broadcast from the radio station CFGP in Grande Prairie.



Andrew Pitchko, Agnes Smith, Blanche Pitchko, Kate Watson, Mrs. Pitchko.

Reverend W.J. Huston was the United Church minister for years. Mrs. Wallace Edgar played the organ. When Hustons moved, Reverend Truax was the new minister. Our next door neighbor was Mrs. Emma Robertson, and next to her lived Charlie Purcell. All the kids were afraid of him because he was an undertaker. On the other side of our house was a Chinese laundry, and next to it was Slim Finch's Livery Stable. We were very fascinated with a talking parrot Mrs. Finch had for years.

In 1937, Felix took up a homestead near Lake Saskatoon Mountain and Pitchko Brothers dissolved their partnership in 1938. Andrew continued with the business until 1941 when he moved his family to Fort Macleod and leased the North Star Oil Garage on mainstreet. He sold the garage in 1947 and worked for the government at Radium Hot Springs for two years. Then in 1954, he moved to Lethbridge and bought a dragline. He was employed by Lethbridge Northern Irrigation, and bought a second dragline and gravel truck in 1952. He retired in 1963 and moved to Calgary in 1968.

Andrew passed away on April 4, 1969, at the age of seventy-five. Mrs. Pitchko stayed in Calgary until the fall

of 1977, and then moved out to Maple Ridge, B.C. to make here home with Blanche.

Felix married Bertha Kuntz in 1939. They moved to Edmonton and he took a welding course. He bought the Darling Welding Shop on Jasper Avenue.

In 1946, they moved to Athabasca, Alberta, and built a garage, the same year they sold and moved back to Edmonton for a short time. Then moved to Clearwater, B.C. and worked for Emil Anderson. The next move was Prince George, B.C. on October 31, 1946. They bought land near the airport. Felix had a tractor and trucks working on local construction. He drove trucks himself until he retired at the age of 73 and retired in town. They had two sons and two grandchildren.

Roman married Mabel Boyd in 1952. They have lived in Dawson Creek for 37 years and have one daughter and three grandchildren. He drove two million accident free miles up the Alaska Highway.

Magdaline married Adrian Wintemute in 1944 and they reside on the family farm 16 miles south of Fort Macleod. They have one daughter, two sons, and three grandchildren.

Mabel lives a half mile down the road from Magdaline. She married Leonard Loyst in 1950. They have no family.

Arthur lives in Lethbridge and works all over the province with his gravel truck.

Blanche married John Tomik in 1951. They have one daughter and live in Maple Ridge, B.C.

The Purves Story

by Audrey Grubb

Lorney Edgar Purves was born in Arnprior, Ontario, on March 31, 1892. When he was quite young, the family moved to Milestone, Saskatchewan, where the family of six boys and two girls grew up.

In the spring of 1916, Dad joined the army, and while home on leave he met Mom, who was a friend of his sister Sarah.

Charlotte (Lottie) Jessie Drysdale was born February 4, 1895, at Renfrew, Ontario. As her mother passed away when she was three months old, an aunt and uncle took her. She lived with them until her dad remarried in 1907, and she came west to live with them near Edmonton, where her dad was working on the High Level Bridge. Mom left home when she was about 17 years old, working at different places, eventually ending up in Regina. Dad and Mom were married in late 1916.

Dad was sent overseas in 1917, and while he was gone, Mom went to live with her aunt and uncle in Renfrew, where Mary Jeanette (Jean) was born August 22, 1917.

Dad was wounded and gassed on June 21, 1918. After Dad came home, they lived on the farm at Milestone. Clifford Lyle was born there October 2, 1919.

In the summer of 1920, Dad came to the Peace River country, and bought a farm from a Mr. Freeman, one mile west of where Wembley is today. He then went back to Milestone, had a sale, and moved the family here that fall.

They worked very hard on the farm, and when Mom had a hired girl, (usually when we were born), Dad couldn't afford a hired man.

Sarah Helena (Helen) was born on the farm March 24, 1923; Alma Beryl, March 5, 1925, and Audrey Eileen, February 3, 1928.

The family went to fairs at Lake Saskatoon and Grande Prairie, where Dad took prizes for his horses. Grain had to be hauled to Grande Prairie by horses before the steel reached Wembley.

In 1926-1927, Dad managed the ball team in Wembley.

When the railroad reached Wembley, and the town moved from Lake Saskatoon, they sold milk to the residents.

In 1928, Dad sold the farm to Jacob Miller of Stony Plain, and we moved to the coast. We lived at New Westminster for a few months, until purchasing a house by the Fraser River, between Haney and Hammond. Jean, Cliff, Helen, and Beryl went to Maple Ridge school. The house burned down the summer of 1931, and we moved back to Wembley, where Dad purchased the McCormick Deering agency.

In 1935, Dad sold the building to Nick Dzaman for a garage, and Bill Palmer took over the agency. Then Dad bought the hotel from Jack Goyne, where we lived for ten years, before selling out to Nat Nickel.

The next venture was building a pool room, north of the hotel, in 1946, which burned down in 1950. So Dad moved a building onto the lot and opened a butcher shop, which he had until selling to Elmer Harder, and moving to Devon in 1953.



The Purves family about 1930.
Beryl, Mrs. Purves, Clifford, Audrey, Jean, Helen, Mr. Lorney Purves.

Jean married Herb Robertson, December 14, 1940. Herb passed away January 9, 1963. Jean lives in Grande Prairie. They have three children; Barbara Lorraine, married Tom Beach and has two daughters, Tammy and Kathy, and one son Jimmy. They live at High River. Judith Elaine married Dennis Haglund, has two sons Ricky and Ryan, and one daughter Robin. They live at Woking. Craig Lyle (Butch) married Candy Cameron. They have no children and live at Beaverlodge.

Cliff married Doreen Dzaman, September 22, 1951. Cliff and Doreen live in Ponoka and have two sons and one daughter. Greg married Lee Rogstad, has one son and lives at Bonnyville. Colleen married Tom Griffith, they have one son Cory, and live in Ponoka. Garry is not married, and lives at Beaverlodge.

Helen married Bill Sontag in September 1944. Bill passed away in March, 1979. Helen lives in Devon. They had six daughters; Sandra married Ernie Higgins, they have two daughters, Pam and Wendy, and one son Ronny, and live at Consort. Pat married Doug Huget, has one daughter Kelly, and one son Dennis, and lives at Redwater. Joanne married Barry Fulford, they have twin daughters, Sarah and Susan, they live at Mayerthorpe.

Susan is not married, lives at home while going to university. Cindy is not married, lives at Alberta Beach. Shelly is still going to school.

Beryl married Roy Boyd on December 24, 1944 and lives in Grande Prairie. They have seven children, Cheryl married Frank Gorrie, they live just outside Toronto, with their three children, two daughters, Janet and Dionne, and one son Todd. Donna married Gerald Campbell, lives in Grande Prairie, and has one son Clinton, and one daughter Roxanne. David (Donna's twin) was married to Lucille Heikel, they had one daughter Tonia. David lives in Whitehorse. Valerie married Norman Palmer, they live in Grande Prairie, have one son Kevin, and one daughter Lori. Vivian married Kerry Sandboe, lives in Grande Prairie, and has one son Cameron and one daughter Tracy. Marilyn married Kurt Pederson, lives in Grande Prairie, and has two daughters Nicolle and Debra. Susan is not married, and lives in Grande Prairie.

Audrey married Glen Grubb March 25, 1949, and lives in Wembley. They have two children; daughter Terry, married George Dechief, lives in Dawson Creek with their three girls Michelle, Lynda, and Cindy. Son Randy married Marilyn Brent, lives in Wembley with their two sons Kelly and Jody.

Mom passed away, while visiting Frobisher, Saskatchewan, on July 10, 1956. Dad passed away August 23, 1967, at the Grande Prairie Hospital.

The Rautenstrauch Family

Gerhard Paul Franz Rautenstrauch, only son of a policeman, immigrated to Canada in 1925. After spending two years in eastern Canada, Regina, and Winnipeg, Gerd came to the Peace River country to work on the Lee Bordon Ranch. While working there, he met a friend, Carl Roper, who persuaded him to take a homestead at Huallen. Gerd took a quarter on the correction line.

A year later his father died and Gerd went to Germany. Six months later, he returned to Huallen with his mother. While he was in Germany, he met Dorothea Scholz, daughter of a railway agent. In 1930, Dorothea came to Canada and they were married November 4, in Edmonton.

Mother often related how when they arrived at Huallen on the train a blizzard was raging. They were met by Carl Roper, and by sleigh they left for the three mile trip home. Half way home, the sleigh tipped but mother was able to save the coal oil lamp despite the deep snow. At the time, she couldn't figure out why Gerd and Carl were so happy that the lamp was saved. They had just purchased it at Clows store. Her trunks, containing dishes which she brought all the way over, or even if she was hurt, didn't seem to worry them. She found out why when they arrived home. They had only candles till then.

Gerd's mother passed away in 1933 and is buried in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery.

In 1942, the family moved to Kelowna due to Gerd's health. After ten months, the mountains seemed to be coming closer together, so they returned to the prairies. Gerd managed Co-op Stores in La Glace, Wetaskiwin, Falun, and Bruderheim. In 1951, the family returned to the Huallen district and purchased the Hugh Boyd farm from Walter Ulmer. A year later, Alex Mitchell persuaded Gerd to manage the former R. Kranz store in Wembley. Eight months later, Gerd in partnership with Val Hennig and Albert Decock, purchased the store changing it to Wembley Department Store. Gerd operated this store for the next 18 years till it was closed. Gerd retired to his daughter's farm in Elmworth.

His piano talent, which kept him alive during his arrival in Canada, was used many times especially during Christmas concerts at the Aspen Dale School. His Pacemaker tractor was used to move the Aspen Dale school in the 1930's.

His fondest memories were the card parties, and the weddings of those early farm years. Till his dying day, he never forgot the kindness and the memories of those hard yet wonderful 1930's. Just two hours before he passed away in the Beaverlodge Hospital, he remarked to his son the biggest mistake I ever made was listening to Dr. Carlisle and selling the farm in 1941. He served as Village Secretary-Treasurer for eight years and as County School Representative for Wembley for four years.

Dorothea passed away in Grande Prairie April 6, 1971. Gerhard passed away in Beaverlodge May 3, 1975. Both are buried in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery, Wembley.

Their children are; Eva, Wolfgang, and Christa. Eva was born in 1935. She is married to Jack Heikel of Huallen who farms at Elmworth. They have five children, Erwin, Linda, Randy, Wendy, and Kathy.

Wolfgang was born in 1932 and is married to Betty Dzaman of Wembley. He works for Proctor and Gamble in Grande Prairie. They have two children, Darcy and Larry.

Christa was born in 1941. She is married to Gordon Hommy of Beaverlodge. He is manager of the Treasury Branch in Grande Prairie. They have two children, Doug and Jance.

The Wolf Rautenstrauch Family

Wolf came to Wembley with his family in 1952, and for the next 20 years worked for the Wembley Department Store. On August 4, 1954, he married Betty Dzaman who was employed in the Drug Store.

Wolf drove the school bus for the County of Grande Prairie from 1962 to 1972, was also councillor and mayor of Wembley from 1966 to 1970. Prior to this, he was fire chief for five years.

Betty and Wolf moved to Grande Prairie in 1972 where they still reside. Wolf is employed by Proctor and Gamble, and Betty by Alberta Government Telephones. They have two sons, Darcy and Larry.

Darcy, born in 1955, was married to Pamela Dunn, October 6, 1979. They live in Grande Prairie and he is supervisor for Gibson Petroleum.

Larry, born in 1957, is single, lives in Grande Prairie and is a driver for Trimac.

Henry Rehaume Family

The Rehaume family moved to the Wembley district in November, 1952, taking over the service station located on the highway one mile north of the village from Elmer Harder. This realized an old dream of Henry's to have a service station and he called it Henrys Hi-way Service. This venture kept the whole family very busy, especially after we acquired some livestock and did the farm work as well.

The oldest children - Joyce, Larry and Lucille were already going to school when we came to Wembley. Terry started the same year the new school was opened and Alan began in 1956.

These were very happy, busy years, with everyone occupied with school activities, sports, Sunday School, and 4-H. All five of the children were fortunate to have Mrs. Elizabeth Bunyan as their grade nine teacher. The four oldest completed their grade twelve at Wembley High School, while Alan finished his final year at Grande Prairie High.

Henry and Blanche were both active members of Wembley United Church. Blanche also taught Sunday School and was a member of the United Church Women and the Lake Saskatoon Community Club. Members used to groan about the work involved with clubwork, catering to banquets, wedding receptions, and the annual fowl suppers, but these activities and others left a wealth of happy memories.

Henry was born near Wetaskiwin, going to school and working in that general area until joining the army in 1942. He came to Grande Prairie for basic training where he met Blanche Smith and they were married in December, 1942. After the war was over, they returned to the Grande Prairie area where Henry worked on the farm, saw mill, and garage work until moving to Wembley.

Blanche was born in Grande Prairie, and attended Percy School, the district where her parents, Fred and Minerva Smith, had settled after coming to the Peace country over the Long Trail in 1911.

In 1968, Henry, Blanche, and Alan (the only one left at home) moved to Grande Prairie where Henry worked for the Co-Op Store until he retired in 1978, moving to Terry's farm at Woking.

Joyce graduated from Royal Alexandra Hospital, married Robert Buchanan, and they live in Sherwood Park with sons Kevin, Kent, and Keith.

Larry worked for Alberta Government Telephones before moving to Edmonton where he has since been employed as a trucker. He married Shirley Luciuk and they have a daughter, Nicole and son, Brett.

Lucille received her R.N. from the Royal Alexandra Hospital, married Peter Cary and they have two sons, Christopher and Darren.

Terry received his Bachelor of Arts from University of Alberta, then went to Europe for a change in scene before getting his teacher's certificate. He married Sharon Walmsley and they have a daughter, Holly. They reside on their farm at Woking where Terry is principal of the school.

Alan worked for several years before going to University for his Bachelor of Science. He married Susan Graham and they live in Calgary.

The Rigby Family

by Betty (Rigby) Bunyan

I don't remember the actual arrival of the Rigby family at Wembley. My parents, two older brothers, Justyn and Lloyd, and I came from Calgary on a snowy, cold New Year's Eve with two carloads of machinery, livestock and household effects. My father had purchased a farm on the south side of Lake Saskatoon in close proximity to the original trading post but by this time most of the buildings had been removed from the old site and were relocated in Wembley. Mr. and Mrs. Rutledge welcomed us to their home until we were settled in our own sometime early in 1927.

My own first recollections of Wembley are happy ones. As a pre-schooler I got the opportunity to go with my father to town, perched atop a "triple" wagon box load of grain. To accompany my father on the four mile trip to town was a delight and it was from his great fount of information that I was introduced to Bible stories and received my basic education in British history and literature.

I recall the winding road to town around the Walthew buildings, by Reed's farm adjoining the village and then along elevator row. Passing the Alberta Pacific elevator, we would see Mr. Bill Feist on the job at the Wheat Pool. Our destination was the United Grain Growers where Wallace Edgar would grade a sample and dump the load.

At least once a week we went to town to buy our groceries, usually travelling in our 1929 Essex which Dad had purchased in Wembley. I can still visualize Charlie Cowpar, in the Kranz store, standing behind the counter with the counter book placed on top of a box, which enabled him to write out the grocery order in his meticulous handwriting. All items were recorded on the counter check in those days and collected by the clerk from the shelves behind the counter. Charlie would usually begin the writing of the order before my mother had her list out, and would say, whilst peering over his gold-rimmed spectacles at her, "Will's Pipe Tobacco and Shredded Wheat, Mrs. Rigby, and what else for you today?"

In the meantime I would be looking at the big round cheeses in the glass covered stands wondering if we would be having a wedge, or joy of joys, one or two bananas off the bunch hanging from the big hook in the front window. I wonder if anyone else remembers the large tarantula Lawrence Kranz found in one crate and kept in a glass jar for the customers to view.

On a summer's day we stopped to purchase an ice cream cone from Wong's Cafe, near Jimmy Wood's garage. Our meat was bought at Tom Dancy's Meat Market in the early days and later at the shop operated by the senior Bissetts, who from time to time purchased an animal for slaughter from my father. Necessary hardware items were picked up at the George Neilson Hardware across from the Kranz Store or at the new Bunyan and Elliot Hardware up the street. We got our mail from a box in the Post Office, number 54, which was to contain the Rigby mail for over 50 years.



Mr. and Mrs. W. Rigby and Mr. and Mrs. Reg Bunyan.

During the depression years I can remember an exciting two-day sports event in Wembley. The main thrills for me were the merry-go-round ride and the fantastic fireworks display which culminated in the illumination of the heads of the King and Queen! This must have been Jubilee year, 1936. Previously we used to go to the Fair Grounds to the big tent when the Chataqua performers included

Wembley in the circuit and brought a little "outside culture".

We were busy in those years, too. Lloyd and Justyn were members of the Junior Grain Club, a forerunner of the present 4-H clubs. Our fall and winter evenings were spent in the preparation of prize-winning grain samples which started as a hobby but gained in importance as their expertise increased. The publicity given to the exploits of Herman Trelle had put Wembley "on the map", and the town's reputation as the centre of a good grain-growing area was further enhanced by the activities of a growing number of young competitors. Eventually Wembley was to adopt the slogan "the town that made the Peace River famous."

I attended school at Lake Saskatoon until 1940. Our teachers at that time, Howard and Jack Minchin, played hockey with the Wembley Lions. We were always interested in the games and if ever able to attend one, cheered the famous Wembley foreward line of the Robertson brothers, Len, Herb and Bill.

The war years brought many changes. The most significant one for me was regarding school. It was necessary for me to go to Wembley for high school and in good weather I biked the distance to town, meeting my girlhood friend, Rose Sebastian (Mrs. J. McLaren of Victoria) part way and we concluded the trip together. Coincidentally, we now live about the same distance apart in Victoria. Mr. B. Comfort was our well-liked teacher and principal at that time.

With an ever increasing shortage of teachers and general man power everyone shared in doing what work had to be done. My final year of high school was to see my father return to the teaching profession after an absence of several years, but his thorough training and mastery of the subject matter was to stand him in good stead. In the fall of 1942, Justyn, and his wife Eva, Dad and I, and boy-friend, John Bunyan, using three bundle racks and a threshing machine completed the harvest during an extended school holiday. Dad, John and I all went back to school together. My parents had purchased the former Alberta Pacific elevator house on main street and from then on the family residence for them and myself was Wembley. Dad continued to teach high school in Wembley until the teacher shortage was alleviated sometime after the conclusion of the war. For some years he farmed again with Justyn, but also continued in a valued and respected capacity to guide the progress of education in the community until his death in 1960. Four of his nine grandchildren, following in his footsteps, are teachers, also.

Our main winter recreation was playing badminton in the town hall. There was lots of enthusiasm and many skillful players made the competition stiff. How I wished I had the skill "playing net" that Hector and John Paul and Armine Kastner displayed. The highlight of the week was the delicious lunches that players took turns preparing and serving before midnight at the Saturday night session. After lunch the "night owl players" would get down to serious play until the wee small hours.

In 1946 John and I were married in the Wembley United Church by the Reverend Whaley. John eventually assumed management of the store and Massey-Ferguson agency, enlarging the business to include a grocery department as well. I taught school before staying home with three little Bunyans, Gregory, Rhonda and Rosalyn. I returned to teaching in 1956 and continued to do so until 1966, when we moved to Victoria, B.C. Our children completed their education here and have established themselves in homes of their own, but all presently living in the city.

In 1977 the Rigbys all gathered in Wembley in May to attend our Mother's 90th birthday celebration. At this time she was honored by the community in recognition of this milestone. In 1978 because of declining health she reluctantly left her home in Wembley, where she had lived independently after my father's death. She had lived in the Wembley district for 52 years. She then made her home with John and me in Victoria, until her death in October of 1979. Justyn continues to reside on the 'home' farm and Lloyd lives in Yakima, Washington.

S.H. Riggs and Family

by Doreen (Feist) Riggs

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Riggs, Herb, Wellington, and Betty moved from Edmonton to Wembley in January of 1928. Mr. Riggs and Herb built and opened a general store on the east side of main street. They operated the store until the depression years.

Mr. Riggs served many years as the town clerk. He also represented Tip Top Tailors in the Wembley area. He was an active Mason at the local lodge. Mr. Riggs died at Wembley in January, 1944.

Mrs. Riggs was a busy lady, involved in the women's organizations of the town. She was an active church worker for the Anglican Church. Many will remember Mrs. Riggs for her lovely garden behind the store.

Herb married Fran Hanley of Wembley. They had two children, Jack and June. Herb and Fran homesteaded across the Wapiti for many years. Herb had a post office and used to come to Wembley every Friday to pick up the mail from the Wembley Post Office. In June of 1940 Herb and family moved to Fort Erie, Ontario, to work at Fleet Aircraft. Fleet was building war training planes. Herb retired at Courtenay, B.C. where he died suddenly on April 5, 1979.

Wellington received his high school education at Wembley. He used to work after school and on Saturdays at Bunyan's hardware. In 1936 he went to Calgary Tech where he took the two year aircraft course. He graduated in the spring of 1938. He spent a year at Yellowknife making the trip by canoe with Len Robertson and two other friends. In 1939, Wellington was employed by Fleet Aircraft at Fort Erie, Ontario. In 1940 he married Doreen Feist of Wembley. They had two children, Gordon and Reta. Wellington served a year in the Royal Canadian Air Force in Canada and returned to Fleet in 1944 where he remained until 1949. He joined the A.V. Roe company of Toronto. He was the production manager at the building of the Arrow and was vice president of manufacturing at the time the Arrow was cancelled in 1959. Wellington died in March of 1965. Doreen returned to teaching and is now retired, living at Ridgeway, Ontario.

Betty attended school in Wembley then had a business education. She worked for C.I.L. in Edmonton and Calgary. She married Ivor Jessop and had two children, Stanley and Patricia. Betty and family moved to Boise, Idaho, where Betty died in 1967.

Mr. and Mrs. Riggs had three older children who came to visit frequently; Marjorie Stuart, Helen Karran, and Clint Riggs. Clint was married to Jean Lowe. He died in 1959. Helen and Marjorie live at Victoria.

The A.E.W. Roberts Family

Cap Roberts came to Canada from England in 1907 and in the winter of 1910 came to Lake Saskatoon over the Grouard Trail with two yoke of oxen. He was preceded on the trail by his future bride, Julia Thompson, travelling with her mother and family to settle on the south shore of Bear Lake.

During the years prior to World War I he farmed a section of land two miles south of Lake Saskatoon in the summer, and freighted supplies for Revillon Freres Company from Edmonton in the winter.

He went overseas with the 66th British and later transferred to the 49th Edmonton Regiment and saw action in Ypres, Somme, Vimy Ridge, was wounded at Amiens, and won the military cross at Arros.

Early in 1915, they had lost everything to a fire so on returning from overseas in 1919, he had to build a new house and barn. A box social and dance held in the new barn raised $1492.50 towards building the new G.W.V.A. hall in Lake Saskatoon which is still in use.

Eldest son Dick left in 1937 to join the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in Esquimalt, went overseas with them in 1939, returned in 1945 and married Joan Frewer of Lake Saskatoon. Retiring from the army in 1962, he went directly into the real estate business and presently owns and operates Troy Real Estate Ltd. in Calgary.

Ted was with the Royal Canadian Air Force, served overseas and retired after 28 years service. He now is with Okanagan Helicopters Ltd. in Vancouver.

Margaret joined the navy and after the war taught school in B.C. and for the past 30 years has been teaching and doing missionary work in Taiwan.

Jack also was with the Navy during World War II, after which he went with Northern Electric. He managed the northern B.C. area for several years and retired in Winnipeg where he now lives and has a manufacture agent business.

Cap left Wembley in 1941 and joined the Army again in Edmonton. They lived there until 1947 when they moved to Vancouver where he was very active with the legion in welfare work.

Mrs. Roberts died in 1970, and Cap in 1976 just a few days after his 91st birthday.



Mabel Gilmour, Mrs. Cap Roberts, Margaret and Jack, on Roberts farm about 1936.

The Lloyd Roberts Family

by Lloyd Roberts

We, Lloyd and Caroline Roberts, came to Wembley from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, in 1919 with McDaniels. We travelled to Grande Prairie on the railroad from Edmonton. It was quite a trip. You could pick berries along the track at times when the train had a slow and "get there sometime" attitude.

We bought a farm with "Soldier Settlement Board" funds complete with cows, horses, etc. from a Mr. Lawrence. That winter was awful and prices were down and we had quite a time to feed the stock. We loved the country but had a hard time to make a living. I cut wood with a circular saw for the neighbors. We used to haul logs from the Wapiti.

Son Allen was born in 1920 at the farm with Dr. Carlisle attending and I administered the anesthetic. Frank went to school at Hillhead, near Watson's.

We made butter and put our name on it, and took eggs (without a rooster) and sold them in Wembley for better prices to Kranz store. We used to go to the Wapiti in berry time and canned raspberries and black currants. We stayed there for two days picking and canning. We used to take a lot of prizes at the Lake Saskatoon Fair in the early days.

On Sundays, we always made ice cream and neighbours came over. Finlay Watson, and Smiths' were our direct neighbours. Kents lived two miles away.

Our nearest church was at Lake Saskatoon and still stands. I can't recall the minister's name but he was an Anglican from England.

We later took a homestead near Garrett's, south of us. Garretts have both passed away.

Our last crop of oats was good and we got ten cents a bushel. Later, we moved to Powell River, B.C.

Frank Lloyd (F.R.) Roberts changed his name to Lloyd C. Roberts after moving to Powell River because his and his son's (Frank Jr.) mail was always getting mixed up. His son, Frank, and family live at Powell River. They have one son and three daughters all married. Allen and his family, one son and one daughter, both single, also live at Powell River.

Note: Since Lloyd C. Roberts sent this story to us, he passed away with lung cancer on December 1, 1979 at the age of 88 years. Caroline is 81 years of age and will be going into a senior home as soon as one is available as she is not able to be by herself any longer.



Lloyd and Caroline Roberts June 1978.

Ida and Henry Rollin

by Ida E. (McDougall) Rollin

We, the McDougall family, arrived in Grande Prairie in 1920.

Uncle Jim Howard was my mother's brother, that is why we came to the Peace River, as she wanted to be near him. He was a wonderful man! We stayed with Uncle Jim and Aunt Katie about six months, then moved to the Matt Graham quarter for a short time, and then to the Jacob Dean quarter, living there a few years until Dad and brother John built our house on our own quarter, NE 13-70-9-W6 and moving there about 1927 or 1928.

During this time, we went to the Hillhead school, which was west of the present site of Wembley. This school was later moved to Wembley and had an addition of another classroom added to it.



Henry and Ida Rollin, in front of their home in Wembley.

After leaving school, I worked in the Bob Kranz store, for 20 years and enjoyed all the wonderful people we served. Some of them that I remember were Ma Brainard, Bill Grant, Frank Ramsden, Paul Rainer's, Ma and Slim Finch, Bob Shaw, Matt Graham, Walter and Fred Roberts, Bob Tilt, Charlie Cowpar (who also clerked in Kranz store and was also the Justice of the Peace for Wembley), Bulldog Smith, J. Archer and family, Allsops, Rigby's and Jim Woods.

I also remember Williams and Nelson. We were sure scared kids, walking to school, after Williams walked up to Nelson and shot him dead. We were sure Williams was under every bridge on the way to school. Fred Barber, our very good teacher used to tell us; "If he, Williams, comes out from under that bridge, give him your lunch and run like ____!"

When I was going to school, I used to babysit the Purves kids; Jean, Clifford, Helen, Beryl, and Audrey, while their parents took the train to Grande Prairie to hockey games, and got back in time for me to go to school. They were sure good kids to look after.

There were five of us kids, Nellie (Mrs. Sid Watson); Annie (Mrs. Carl Johnson, now Mrs. Currie, after Carl's death); me, Ida, who had a handsome young man by the name of Henry Rollin, changed my name, from McDougall to Rollin; Irene, my youngest sister who became Mrs. Jock Stewart, one of a large family of boys who lived on a farm near Wembley; and John, who remained single.

Henry, my husband, did a great deal of work in the progress of Wembley. He was a barber, a fine carpenter and a good thinker. He served on the council and was Mayor of Wembley. He also took active part in baseball, softball, and badminton. Wembley had a very good badminton club.

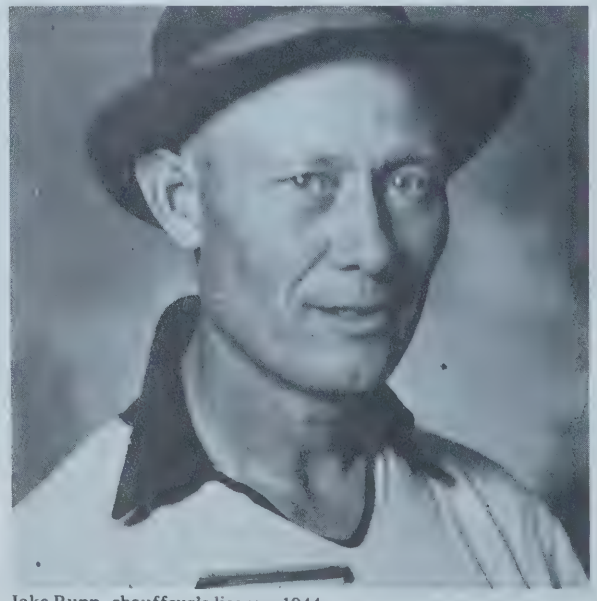
We left Wembley in 1948 to move to Victoria, B.C. where we have lived since and enjoy it very much. Victoria is a wonderful city, "Beautiful City of Gardens" and the climate, I am sure, is the best in the world. Once you have lived in the Peace River Country, though, you always want to return on holiday to see the wonderful people, and fish in the Wapiti River.

The Rupp Family Story

I, Katie Rupp was born in 1900 at St. Owens, Manitoba. Our post office was Lydiatt.

In November of 1921, I married Jacob Rupp and left home. We moved to Morse, Saskatchewan, where Jacob worked on the railroad till 1926. Then we both worked on the farm for a bachelor by the name of Harry Webber for two years.

In 1928, we moved to Wembley. We put in a lot of hard and tough times. I sold butter for ten cents a pound or traded it for groceries. Eggs were five cents a dozen. I took in some washing, did it all by hand at first, then I got a washing machine. I often used to iron thirty-five white shirts besides the colored ones, and still go and work at some of the places in town. I worked for the Neilsons, the Bunyans, Mrs. Sinclair, Mrs. Archer, Mrs. Edgar, and helped to clean the church a couple of times. I worked at the Wembley fair grounds two years, too.



Jake Rupp, chauffeur's license, 1944.



Mrs. Rupp and son Wilfred at his workshop.

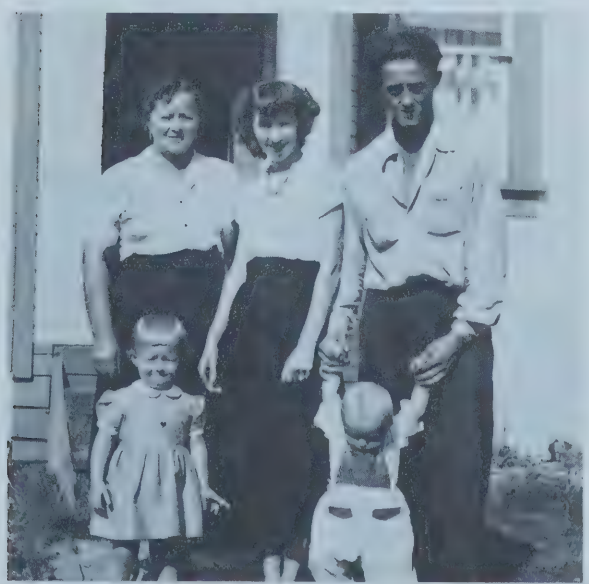
My husband Jake worked at a place at Beaverlodge for a man called Mr. Stone for forty dollars a month. Later, he started work at Boyd Johnson's hauling gas to the farmers all around as far as La Glace, Huallen, and Dimsdale. After he quit the trucking, we were in wood selling around Wembley. He also worked for Jim Woods across the Wapiti River in the sawmill, till we left Wembley in the spring of 1947.

We moved to Vancouver and lived there until 1951. In June, we moved out to Coquitlam. Here Jake worked for Underground Power, digging sewers, and helped to build sidewalks until he got sick.

Our two boys had moved out with us, and young Jake got married in 1950. He worked on the railroad in Vancouver for a year, then he took up carpenter work which is his job now. He has three children. The girl, Vickie, is married and works for I.C.B. Company. Her husband works on a fire boat in Vancouver. Their two boys, Jack and Peter, have a suite in an apartment and do their own cooking.

Wilfred is living up at Prince George. He got a small farm, fourteen acres, and has worked at the logging camp every winter for the last fourteen years. He is not married.

I now live at Surrey.



Jack Rupp, his wife, Chris, Mrs. Rupp with their two oldest children.

The F.W. Schenk Family

by F.W. Schenk

I was born at Sauk Center, Minnesota on October 25, 1899. My people came to Wetaskiwin in 1906. In 1909, my father passed away. My mother was left with five children and I was the youngest.

In the spring of 1916, my mother and I came to Grande Prairie and my mother married Herman Ellert whom she had known in Sauk Center. He homesteaded one mile straight east of Grande Prairie in 1911.

I proved up a homestead four miles east and one mile south and sold it for $1000 after I started to work for the railway. When I got a job that paid twice a month, I decided it was better than land.

I hired on with the old Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia (which became the Northern Alberta Railway) in 1923 and on November 4, 1924, locomotive foreman Bill (Sledge Hammer) Henderson, Billy Bates, and I moved the equipment to the new engine house at Wembley. The town had built up during the summer.

I got married to Christine Dolemo in 1925 and our first son, Francis, was born in 1926. He passed away at 43 years of age. Our youngest son, David, married Bunny Day of South Wapiti. We have 13 grandchildren, seven in the Wanham area. David at present is at Edson. Our daughter Celia of Dawson Creek, B.C. had three children. She passed away at 43 years of age also.

I have good memories of my stay at Wembley which was not very long. I was promoted to locomotive foreman and had to move to McLennan, Alberta.

Again in 1929, I was moved to Rycroft and became the first locomotive foreman there. In 1957, I transferred to Dawson Creek, B.C. and was the last locomotive foreman here. I was retired on November 1, 1964.

I will relate an amusing incident that happened to Dr. Carlisle. One winter night he got a phone call from a farmer that his son was in great pain and very sick. Dr. Carlisle was not too sure he could find the place at night and asked that a lantern be hung outside to aid him to get to the place. After a search, he gave up and returned home. When he later contacted the farmer, he told him he was sorry but he could not find the light. It turned out that the boy got better and the farmer put out the lantern and went to bed.

Paul Schmidt Family

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his wife were murdered in Sarajevo, Bosnia. This act was the beginning of the First World War. This world war was devastating to the German nation. As well as suffering heavy losses during the war, Germany, under the Treaty of Versailles, which officially ended the war, lost much of its European territory and had its army reduced. Germany was also required to pay the Allied nations vast amounts in reparations or payments for war damages. In 1918, the German emperor, Wilhelm II, was overthrown in a revolution and the country was declared a republic. Unrest and dissatisfaction followed. Inflation sharply reduced the value of German money and many Germans were ruined. Jobs were difficult to obtain.

The Schmidt family were caught in this economic squeeze. They had lost a considerable amount of money when a new money system was set up in 1923 in an at-

tempt to end the inflation. Disillusioned with the German conditions of the time, the family heard from a friend who had gone to the United States of jobs and land available in Canada. The family decided that Canada offered new hope and opportunity. Finances prevented all of them coming immediately, so in 1924 the eldest son, Willy and his brother-in-law, Frank Marth left for Canada. They would send for the other members of the family as soon as possible. On June 25, 1925, Paul Schmidt, accompanied by his sister, Minnie Marth and her small son Heinz left Hamburg for Canada. They landed in Quebec City July 4, 1925, and came by train directly to Edmonton, arriving a month after leaving their home in Woblanse. In Edmonton, they were met by a Mr. Aberhart, who was Paul's sponsor, along with his brother Willy. Having safely arrived in Edmonton, Paul spent his last fifty cents on a haircut. They went to Stony Plain where Paul worked for Mr. Aberhart and some of the other farmers of the district. Paul and Willy saved their money and in 1926 were able to bring their parents, Fredrick and Augusta Schmidt and younger sister Herta to Canada. Mr. and Mrs. Schmidt and Herta stayed on a farm at Golden Spike where they helped brush land for the owner.

In the spring of 1927, the availability of cheap land for homesteading brought the whole family to the Wembley district. They stayed on the old farm known as "Kent's Place" while Paul, Willy and their Dad built a log house on Willy's quarter, SW 26-70-8-W6. Paul homesteaded NW 23-70-8-W6. With a roof over their head, the family turned to other immediate problems. Paul and Bill went to work to earn money for machinery and seed while their father started to clear the land with axe and grub hoe.

Paul worked many years for George Stoll, pioneer of the Edson Trail. Mr. Stoll had originally come from Illinois, but his parents were German so he was able to help Paul with the English language. Of even more assistance was Mrs. Stoll who did not speak German. Therefore, Paul had to learn English in order to get along with the lady of the house. Western magazines helped Paul master the written component of the English language.

Like many other young men of the pioneer era, Paul found that his employer had an attractive young daughter. Before her death, Mrs. Stoll told him that he had her approval if he wanted to wait to claim Marjorie's hand in marriage when she was old enough. Always a man with much patience, Paul decided to do just that. In the spring of 1940, Paul rented three quarters of land from Robert Currie. In July 1940, Paul Schmidt and Marjorie Stoll were married. About 1942, they decided to buy the farm they were renting - NW-2-71-8-6. The other quarter was sold to Frank Marth.

Farming in these days was not the highly mechanized operation of the present. The first year Paul and Bill had only one binder between them so it was kept running from dawn to dark, changing horses twice a day. Paul had a gang plow and used seven horses for plowing. Later on the first tractor he had was a John Deere on steel. This tractor proved to be a worthy investment as it was used to break land for many of the neighbours as well as being the power source on brother Bill's threshing machine.

Many changes have taken place, too, in our modes of transportation. In their early days, Paul and Marjorie went to town for mail and groceries with a team and buggy. As conditions and prices improved, they were able to purchase a car - a 1928 Model A Ford. In the 1940's, a car was not usually considered to be one of the components necessary for the acquisition of an education, but that old Ford was important. The Schmidt children, Ethel, Theresa and George started school at Pipestone Creek and later went to Wembley. For many years, with Marjorie at the wheel, the old model A headed for school at Pipestone, picking up Mrs. Olsson, the teacher, and all the kids along the way. Mud, rain, cold weather and snow drifts did not deter Marjorie and her Model A, but the old car did outsmart her on one occasion - when the wheel came off and went rolling down the road in front of her!

In spite of the ups and downs of farm life, Paul and Marjorie Schmidt enjoyed country life and continued to farm the same land for 28 years. In the spring of 1968, they retired to 9661 Hillcrest Drive in Grande Prairie, where they continue to reside. Even though Paul is retired he continues to "farm", his garden being among the best on the block.

Ethel is married to Leonard Uhryn and lives at Woking where she has been teaching school for many years while her husband works as Section foreman for the N.A.R. and does some farming. They have four children - Kelvin, Leona, Paul, and David.

Theresa is married to Dan Kuntz and lives at Grovedale, where they operate a farm. They have six children - Marjorie, Erwin, Donna, Raymond, Larry, and Murray.

George is married to Veronica Bible and lives in Grande Prairie where he works as Shop Foreman for the Doug Lewis Trucking Company. They have five children - Shelly, Billy, Gordon, Dennis, and Jean.

Mrs. Rose Sinclair

by Mrs. Jean Carlisle

Mrs. Sinclair was born and brought up in Lindsay, Ontario. She married Kenneth Sinclair at the end of World War I, and they came to the Peace River country and homesteaded in the Goodfare district.

Later they moved to Lake Saskatoon, and Mr. Sinclair was appointed Postmaster. When Lake Saskatoon moved to Wembley, they continued to run the Post Office there. Mr. Sinclair died soon after the move, and Mrs. Sinclair carried on as Postmistress until her retirement.

Her hobbies were gardening, needlework and bridge, and she was very good at all three. Her garden was a blaze of colour during the summer months.

On retirement, she moved to Edmonton where she lived until her death in the 1970's.



Mrs. Rose Sinclair - Post Mistress, Chris Miller, Ida Rollin and Olive Kowensky (Kastner).

The James and Mona Smith Family

James Smith was born in 1891 in Ayreshire, Scotland. He came to Canada in 1912, stopping to work at Harris, Saskatchewan, before coming to the Peace River country that same year, filing on a homestead NW 20-71-8-W6 and accumulating, over the years, a section of land.

On January 8, 1929 he married Mona Stephenson of the Dimsdale district. Mona was born in Queens County, Southern Ireland, November 2, 1901, coming to Canada with sister Carrie, arriving at Druid, Saskatchewan August 21, 1921. They had followed brother Jack, who had come two weeks earlier. Harold came later, with Mother, Father and Emily being the last to come out.

Mona and Carrie went on to work in Vancouver in November 1921 where they stayed for three and a half years.

In 1925, the family settled on their farm in the Dimsdale area. Mona returned to her family and worked as a switchboard operator in Wembley where she met Jim Smith at a house dance.

Jim and Mona moved to the Smith farm, two and a half miles west of the town of Wembley after they were married.

On January 18, 1930 their eldest daughter, Jean was born, followed by Anne, April 28, 1934 and Pat, May 9, 1938.



Anne, Mona, Jim, Jean, Pat Smith.

The girls took their schooling at Wembley. Jean and Anne went on to take nursing and Pat took x-ray and laboratory work.

Jean married Maurice Cunningham. They have three boys and one girl and live at Devon, Alberta.

Anne married Floyd Johnson. They have one boy and one girl and live in Edmonton.

Pat married Bill Dobson and they have two girls and live in Grande Prairie.

Jim was on the council of the old Bear Lake Municipality for approximately 30 years, serving as reeve for some time. At the formation of the county in 1950, he continued his civic work as councillor serving at various times as chairman of the county council, on the county school committee and chairman of the municipal committee - a post he held at the time of his death.



Jim and Mona Smith.

Prior to the formation of the county, he was on the executive of the old municipal association.

Jim was also a member of the executive of the first Pioneer Lodge board; chairman of the Health Unit and Grande Prairie Hospital Board; and on the local advisary committee for Lake Saskatoon Provincial Park.

On Monday morning July 14, 1958, Jacob Goertzen, a county employee, also of Wembley had gone to the field to see Mr. Smith, at that time, chairman of the municipal committee, and found him dead. He had evidently been on his knees greasing the disc at the time of his death.

Mona now resides in Grande Prairie.

The Stamp Family Story

Franz Johann Werner Stamp was born on July 28, 1897, in Lunden, West Germany. His education and business apprenticeship was cut short by induction into the German Army in 1916. After being wounded in World War I, Werner worked at a variety of jobs mostly on farms. He likely heard of the golden opportunities in North America due to a massive advertising campaign. Like others, he chose to leave home and family to pursue more promising life goals remote from European problems.

So, in 1926, he, sponsored by the Lutheran Immigration Board, sailed to Canada on the CP Ship MontClare where he met Erich Andersen, still a resident of Wembley in 1979.

Together they worked their way across Canada starting with the Zettler families of Neustadt, Ontario. They still recall Werner and Erich as good hired men and the many good sing-songs around the piano. Next stop was Winnipeg, in 1927, doing construction work. That fall and in the spring of 1928, it was Major Leo Schoof's crop that needed harvesting in Claresholm, Alberta. In April, 1928, the last stop was Wembley, end of steel boom town.

Here Werner started a lifetime activity of buying land. From Wallace Edgar, Erich and Werner purchased NE 22-71-8-W6, first homesteaded by Charles Scott in 1913.

Anna Mathilde Katherine Thiessen was born on December 5, 1899, in a farming village near Husum, West Germany. Tilla (short for Mathilde) was active in the domestic arts for her family and employers. She like others, yearned to leave Europe to pursue the unknown life of a pioneer woman.

She landed in Halifax on June 3, 1929 and she became the bride of Werner Stamp on September 29, 1929. Pastor Egon Wildgrube performed the marriage ceremony at the Wembley Lutheran Church. Witnesses were Erich Andersen and Dorothy Hennig. For a short time the young couple lived at the Walthew and Beatty farms and then onto the present site of the Andersen place until April, 1934.

In 1930, Sonja Mimmie Margaret was born on June 23. Later she was educated at the Wembley School and at the University of Alberta. She taught school in central and northern Alberta.

In 1931, Uwe Carsten Johannes was born on November 16. He worked on the farm until 1968. Since then he has acquired new life skills in sheltered workshops near Edmonton and in Grande Prairie.

During the bitterly cold winter of the Great Depression, Hans Eric and Gustav Henry were born on January 21, 1934. In April, the expanding family moved from north of Wembley to three miles south. For seventeen dollars, the Stamps bought the logs to construct a four roomed house still in use in 1978.

The twins were educated at Wembley School and the Vermilion School of Agriculture. They continued to work to continue the familiar pattern of land acquisition, and improving rural life in general.

Herman Otto was born on May 20, 1937. After being educated at the Wembley School, he, too, worked at a number of jobs and businesses throughout the south and east Peace and presently in Kelowna, B.C.



Left to Right: Gus, Uwe, Sonja, Eric Stamp.
Left to Right: Front, Mathilde, Herman, and Werner, about 1946.

For his sons, Werner purchased two quarters from Jean LaPlace. In 1953, neighbour Alec Thomson retired from farming to live in the city of Grande Prairie. He sold his quarter SW 10-71-8-W6 which had originally been claimed by Joseph Boyd in 1914. From his neighbours Fred and Caroline (Line) Hamm, Werner bought their two quarters SW 2-71-8-W6 and NW 1-71-8-W6. The first homesteaders were - Alise M. Miller (1917) and John Scott (1917).

On July 4, 1956 Sonja married Henry Leiler, mechanic, of Sexsmith. On October 19, 1957, Herman married Margaret Rose Everton of the Hythe district. Daughter Carrie Susan was born on December 28, 1960. Son Randall Benton was born on July 13, 1963.

On December 7, 1957, Gustav married Hazel Marie Robertson of the Pipestone Creek district. They have two sons - Kelvin Duane born on April 29, 1963 and Darren Henry on August 28, 1970.

Even after Werner and Tilla's retirement from farming in 1968, he purchased the SW 22-71-8-W6 quarter from David and Olga Cochrane. Original homesteader there was William Gilmour (1917).

In early 1969, Werner bought the SE 21-71-8-W6 quarter from Bill and Martha McRae. The first claimant was Harper Fulton (1915). The land has remained in the family, managed and operated by them.

Tilla enjoyed her short retirement near Wembley and she suddenly passed away on January 17, 1969 - a winter of record low temperatures. Widower Werner divided his time between Canada and Europe - maintaining a lively interest in the world about him. His last four years were spent in a friendly farming village near friends and relatives in Northern Germany. Returning to Canada to resettle in Grande Prairie, he passed away suddenly in an Edmonton hospital on November 10, 1975.

Werner and Tilla are in the Lake Saskatoon Cemetery, close to where the whole story began 40 years ago.

Walter Stierle Family

On May 2, 1930, I landed in Wembley having left Poland to come to Canada. It took 24 hours to get to Wembley from Edmonton by train, and the trip was a rough one - like riding a square-wheeled wagon.

The train pulled out of the station to go to Hythe, and I stood alone in a strange town not able to speak English. I walked to the store and began sizing up people who might speak German.

I met a couple of young men and asked if they could speak German or Polish. They said no, but I found they could speak Russian. I had known that a distant relative lived here but these two said they did not know him. They took me to Mr. Pitchko who sold Massey machinery, and his garage at this time was situated between the present post office and town hall. I told him I was looking for Emil Stierle and was told he lived on a farm 14 miles from town. A hired man for Gerhart Rautenstrauch was in town with Gerhart's mother, and since they lived two miles from Emil's, I asked for a ride. They had only a two man buggy, and I had to hold onto the front seat to brace myself while my feet rested on the back axle. At Rautenstrauch's, I got a map drawn up to find Emil's place which meant following a cow path through the bush to get there, since there were no roads between many of the homesteads.

I got to Emil's and worked there for awhile and then went to Paul Schultz's who contracted himself out to brush land for Bob Garret at seven dollars an acre - brushed, piled and burned. I stayed for three months, and began to work for English people in Saskatoon Lake area such as Jimmy Stoker's father. I stayed with these people for a year, and it was here Mr. Stoker taught me how to speak English. Life began changing for me and I began to realize how wonderful this country and its people were, though times were getting harder since the depression had started.

Weather in this country proved the winters bitterly cold with snow up to your waist at times and temperatures dropping to 50 or 60 degrees below. There were chinooks that could melt snow away in the middle of winter. Springs were muddy, and depending on the year, could be late or early. Summers could be dry and hot, or wet. Some were mild, where crops were destroyed by snow.

Dances were held and one would pick up a crew of people to get there. Often enough the sleigh would slip off the track and tip over. Everyone would then help upright the sleigh and off they'd go again. Dances usually took place in the old school houses where those who played fiddles, guitars and pianos supplied the music.

Neighbours brought refreshments and one paid 10¢ to 15¢ for lunch. Many dances were box socials where lunches were bid on as an auction with the proceeds being given to the school house for the next dance and also some to the musicians.

The depression affected all concerned at this time. Wages then were about $15 a month for summer wages and about $5 a month for winter wages. Costs varied for different articles - working boots were $3, overalls were $1.90, a dozen eggs - 3¢ to 5¢, tobacco was 50¢ for half a pound, and flour was 100 pounds for $2.

Meals varied, for 15¢ for stew. One could even get seconds. Roast beef meals were 30¢ to 40¢.

Grain prices were affected as well. Number one wheat was 18¢ for a bushel and oats was 7¢ a bushel. Hay was kept by the farmer himself since there was a lot needed as feed for his animals.

In 1940 things began to change. Wages went up to $30 a month. More people began to settle the area.

Grain prices were going up - wheat was $2 a bushel.

Vehicles were popular then with more people being able to afford them. One thousand to $1100 bought an early 1940 four-door dodge car.

Then in 1939 World War II broke. Men volunteered for the services.

In March 1942, I joined the Royal Canadian Artillery third division, 14th Field Regiment.

I left for Edmonton and had basic training in Calgary and advanced training in Brandon, Manitoba. We landed in England in June for more training for a month in Aldershot.

We trained until D-Day in 1944 and were shipped to France and fought there, then in Belgium, Holland, Germany and then the war ended in 1945. We were stationed in Holland for six months waiting for the boat home. I arrived back home in Wembley in February, 1946.

There were many big changes, everyone was driving cars. No animals were used for farming, now machinery governed the crops.

The Veterans Land Act allowed those who served the opportunity to obtain land for farming which I took up east of Wembley. I started farming and made Wembley my home having adopted Canada as my "Mother Country".

I lived with Mr. and Mrs. Otto Kopp who helped me make my start here. They were like my parents, giving me a home, food and kinship.

I farmed the land but also worked the planers and sawmills in the winter to help the farm make a go for me.

I was a bachelor for six years on this farm, when some friends decided to do some match-making for me. I met my wife, Elsie, who was a widow with two children, and we were married in 1952, and in 1953 we had a daughter, Margaret.

I am now retired and still a resident of this area with all of my family here.

I can only say that this is God's country. It has supplied me with a home and friends, and an appreciation of the freedom and opportunity given to immigrants leaving behind hard livelihoods and looking for a better life.

The Henry Stokke Family

In 1948 Henry married Ruth Robertson, school teacher and music teacher from Grande Prairie (no relation to Edna's husband, Len Robertson). Ruth was born in Vegreville, then lived in Chilliwack, B.C., and moved to Grande Prairie in 1919 where her father was Clerk of the Court for many years. After graduating from Normal School, Ruth taught school at Wembley where she first met Henry. She returned to Grande Prairie where she taught grade two at Montrose Elementary and music out of her home until she and Henry renewed their friendship and were married in 1948. They had two children, Patricia and Harvey.

Henry had been spending his winters in Arizona, so after he and Ruth were married they bought a small trailer and continued travelling until the children were too old to miss that much school. While in Arizona they became involved with Oral Roberts Revivals and devoted their lives to Jesus Christ. They attended church at Grace Home in Dimsdale while the children were growing up, and then Teen Challenge in Grande Prairie.



Back: Jim Barss and Harvey Stokke.
Front: Pat and Tim Barss, Ruth Stokke, Debbie and Aaron Stokke.



Henry Stokke and his first attempt at a snowmobile.

After Pat graduated from High School in Wembley, she went to Bible School in Edmonton, where she met Jim Barss who was also attending. They were married in 1973, and have a son, Timothy, and now live in Langley, B.C.

Harvey started a course in electronics, but decided he would be a farmer as his dad needed help on the farm when his health began to fail. Henry passed away with a heart attack in 1974. The next year Harvey married Debbie Gordon who was born and raised in Toronto. Harvey had met her through Teen Challenge.

Ruth Stokke moved into her parents' original home in Grande Prairie where she still resides, and Harvey and Debbie took over the Stokke farm at Wembley where they still reside. They have two preschool children.

The John Stokke Family

by Erna (Stokke) Talbot

John and Lottie Stokke were born and raised in Wisconsin. John was Norwegian and Lottie, German. After being married in 1902, they came to Alberta where John, being a butter-maker by trade, worked some time in a creamery at Olds, then helped build an elevator at Wetaskiwin.

They moved on to Leduc where Henry was born in 1903. They homesteaded west of Leduc at Telfordville where they also ran the post office and land guide office for the next six years. Wesley was born here in 1907. The land wasn't very good so they sold out and moved to South Edmonton where Henry started school and Wesley, kindergarten.

The next year they moved to the Camrose area where they farmed for the next 12 years, and where Edna and Erna were born in 1914 and 1916.



Edna and Erna Stokke bound for school. Note ski jump on shed or garage in background at their first home.

Hearing about the opportunities in the Peace River area and the wonderful farming land there, Lottie and John, along with Della and Art Nordstrom who had come to the Camrose District from North Dakota, decided to come to Grande Prairie. They came by train bringing their household goods, some machinery and livestock. The Nordstroms had a team of mules which were quite a novelty; they settled 21 miles west of Grande Prairie, which was later Huallen.

Lottie and John arrived in Grande Prairie in May, 1921, and were able to rent the Alex Keevey farm with machinery and stock and the Louis Salvino quarter to the west of it. The George Stolls were to the north and Omi Stewarts to the south of them. This was their home for the next six years.

Wesley and the girls attended the Wapiti School three and a half miles east which was situated one and a half miles west of where Dimsdale now is. John and Lottie took an active part in the community affairs connected with this school as well as the Alexander Forbes Church east and south of the school.

They eventually owned this land and acquired more, two miles east with a good hay meadow so they would have feed for their stock.

The railroad was being built along the north boundary of both their quarters and John and son Henry helped build the railroad grade as well as sell land for the right-of-way.

Lottie Stokke was an accomplished seamstress as well as being able to knit, crochet and tat, and for many years made most of their clothing, especially dresses for herself and the girls and knitted socks and mitts. She also made wool quilts.

They bought their first car in 1924 - a 490 Chevrolet. This provided quite a bit of excitement and enjoyment with friends and neighbours taking rides in it. It also allowed them to get to Grande Prairie for supplies and mail oftener and see different areas of the Grande Prairie district.

They were able to buy a half section to the west of them which would put them just one and a half miles east from where the town of Wembley would be. This was the Howard farm being farmed by Alex Muir who had married Mr. Howard's widow. The Stokkes moved there in 1927. They built their new home here and in the next few years there were many friends coming and going and many changes.

They also sold their land to the east and bought more adjoining where they now lived, closer to Wembley (later Wes Stokke's farm, now owned by Wes's daughter and husband, Sharon and Ken Norton).

They became involved in the community life of the new Hamlet of Wembley. They joined the United Church in Wembley. John served on the Church Board and Lottie belonged to the Ladies Aid. For many years Lottie also belonged to the United Farm Women of Alberta in Lower Beaverlodge (later Huallen) through her friend Della Nordstrom. Her first trip back to Edmonton was as a delegate for this group. They still took part as well in a lot of the community activities of their former friends of Dimsdale. Their closest neighbor here was Jack Mates and son Gordon. The next ten years they progressed from farming with horses to totally mechanized farming.

They eventually had a well-equipped blacksmith shop, and both Wesley and Henry were able to do most of their



John and Lottie Stokke, Edna, Erna and son Dennis at Edna and Len Robertson's home in Wembley, 1941.

repair work as well as overhauling motors, etc. (Henry had taken a welding course.)

Henry also built an airplane. He started by cutting strips for the wings and glueing them together in his bedroom in the upstairs of the old Howard house, then moved into a machine shed, when he needed more room. Lottie sewed the cloth for the body and wings. It was ten to 12 years in the building and getting the propeller and engine for it. The plane was government tested and passed with flying colors as being airworthy.

Henry was taking flying lessons at Grande Prairie, and the day the tests were being taken Bill Godfrey, the first one to be tested, crashed the test plane, so none of the other applicants could take their test. Being involved in World War II, the flying instructor, Mr. Lewis, left, and Henry never did get his pilot's license. However, he flew his plane around the farm a few times and he and Len Robertson had flown it up to Lake Saskatoon and back. Eventually the horses chewed some holes in the wings and it was not repaired. It was on display for a time at the Grande Prairie Airport, and is now in a Museum at Wetaskiwin.

Edna and Erna graduated from high school in 1934. Edna went to Normal School at Camrose, and Erna married Don Talbot, who was the Northern Alberta Railway station agent at Wembley at that time.

Edna taught school at Meadowville the next three years, then Klondike Trail for two years. In 1939 she married Len Robertson and taught in Wembley and also took over the position of secretary for the Village of Wembley. They bought Dr. Carlisle's house where they lived until moving to Grande Prairie in 1953. Edna took over the position of secretary for the Town of Grande Prairie, which she held until 1962 when she moved to Edmonton. She then began with the Alberta Correspondence Schools, where she was employed until retiring in 1979. Edna is now married to Alex Cullen and lives at Mayerthorpe. Len passed away in 1973 due to a stroke.

Edna and Len had two children, Glen and Marcia. Glen married Elaine Miller, daughter of Alfred and Viola Miller. They reside in Grande Prairie and have three children. Marcia married Dick Forth. They now live in Innisfail and have two children.

Erna and Don lived in Wembley until 1940 when Don took over the station at Lac La Biche for four years, then Clairmont for two years, then later McLennan and Waterways (Fort McMurray), where Don passed away in 1953 with a heart attack.

Of their four children, Ken is deceased, Dennis is an electrician for B.C. Forest Products at Mackenzie, B.C. (married with two children). Lynne is married to Wayne Evaskevich, son of Nora and Charlie Evaskevich of Hythe. They have two children and live in Grande Prairie. Shirley is engaged and is a lab technician at the University Hospital in Edmonton.

In 1938 Wes married Myrt George from Edmonton, whose mother and dad had been neighbours of the Stokkes when they lived in Edmonton. The Stokkes had visited them on trips to Edmonton, and Myrt came to Wembley with them to help out at the farm for the fall's work.

John did quite a bit of travelling on his own, and invested in property in Vancouver, hoping to retire there. Lottie didn't want to leave the farm yet and stayed on with Henry on the home place. Henry and Ruth Robertson, whom he had known since she taught in Wembley in the early 1930's, renewed their friendship and were married in 1948. John died of a stroke in 1946, so Lottie bought Henry Rollins' home in Wembley opposite the Wembley Hotel, where she lived until 1964 when she moved to Grande Prairie to live with her daughter Erna. Erna had returned from Edmonton in 1956 and took over the Shalimar Beauty Salon from Evelyn Durda.

Lottie passed away in 1969 at the age of 84.

The Wes Stokke Family

by Myrtle Stokke

I met the Stokke's in 1937 when they stopped in Edmonton on their way down to the States on a holiday. They had met and become friends of my parents, the George's, years before when they lived in Edmonton for awhile. Since I wasn't working at the time, Mrs. Stokke asked me if I would like to come back to Wembley with them and help during the fall work. It was a new experience for me as I'd never been very far from Edmonton until then. The hours we put in were long and the work hard, but I really enjoyed the farm and the excitement that goes along with the hustle and bustle of threshing time. My brother had come up with us, too, and we stayed until just before Christmas, when Wes drove us back to Edmonton and spent Christmas with my family. Since the farm work was considerably less in the winter, and Hank was at home, Wes decided to stay in Edmonton for a month or two for a holiday. We were married there in February of 1938. Wes returned home to prepare a place for us to live and I came back up here early that summer. We moved into our unfinished house and gradually completed it in the next few years. I will always be grateful to the people in and around the Wembley area who accepted me into the community and made me feel so welcome. We have spent 42 very enjoyable years in this Peace River Country.



The Wes Stokke's 25th Anniversary.

My home in Edmonton had been on the outskirts of the south side known as Strathcona and there was a lot of open space and farm land adjoining it in those days. My parents were able to keep chickens and Dad always kept three or four prize jersey cows that supplied us with milk, cream and butter during the depression years. Although my parents had kept cows, I had never learned to milk one or to make butter or bake bread, so now as a farm wife, I had a lot to learn. I'm afraid the first couple of years Wes got the brunt of many of my failures, especially at making bread. I'll never forget the time I mixed up a batch of dough early in the morning hoping it would be good bread sometime that day, but after three or four hours it hadn't risen an inch, so realizing it was another

failure I took it out to the edge of the garden and buried it thinking that was the end of that, only to have Wes come bounding up the steps at noon wanting me to come and see the huge puffball that had come up overnight at the edge of the garden. Apparently the warmth of the sun had made it rise finally and there it was all covered with dirt.

During the next few years, we had four children, Ray, Joyce, Dale, and Sharon. They all attended the Wembley school of which Wes was a school board member for a few years. Wes always enjoyed sports and played badminton with the Wembley club and also curled and every winter did quite a lot of skiing down at the Wapiti in the early years. As the children grew older and could be left on their own I also joined the badminton club and curled for quite a few years, and have many happy memories of the fun we had at the different bonspiels all over the country and our regular curling in Wembley. Also I will always remember the early Wembley sports days we took in where you met all your neighbours and everyone had such a good time and it would end with a big dance in the hall. The berry picking picnics were also quite an occasion as everyone would take lunch and their families and pile into their cars and trucks and head for the blueberry patch, and although it was quite a days work, it made it seem like fun and we had a good visit at lunch time. As the children grew older, they were also included in the curling, playing basketball and hockey in the winter, and hardball in the summer so we seemed to always be on the road for one thing or another. The boys seemed to have a special talent for baseball and hockey and since they started on the Senior B ball team when they were 12 and 14 in Wembley, have played ball every year since. Ray started senior hardball with the Beaverlodge Royals and Dale followed, then they played for the Grande Prairie Eskimos and travelled all over the Peace Country playing in the league and in tournaments for the next few years. In 1962 the Grande Prairie Eskimos picked up some other players from the different teams and entered the Lacombe ball tournament. There a scout by the name of Roland Jones saw the boys play and offered Dale a baseball scholarship to the Sam Houston State Teachers College in Texas, where he spent the next four years getting his degree in Physical Education and playing for their team. We attended his graduation and wedding in 1966. On returning home in the spring he played for the home teams again. Ray and Dale both went to Halifax to participate in the Canada Summer Games. Ray and family spent two years in Hay River where he started playing fastball with the Hay River team. On returning to Grande Prairie he continued playing fastball with the Lewis Bulldogs. He was named to Canada's Senior A Men's Fastball All-star team two years in a row and has a number of trophies for his efforts.



Wes with huge buck deer he shot up on our homestead on Saskatoon Mountain. Dale, Joyce and Sharon in front.

Our family are all married now. Ray married Elaine Moon and they have four children. Joyce married Dan Balisky and they have four children. Dale married Ann Brunson from Texas and they have three children and Sharon married Ken Norton and they have two children. Ken and Sharon are on the home place and still raise a few purebred American Saddlebred horses. Dale is vice-principal of the Ridgevalley school, where he teaches, specializing in physical education. Ann has taught at the Hutterite school for the past two years. Dan and Joyce have Peace Farm Power in Grande Prairie and Ray is with the United Farmer's of Alberta Bulk Plant in Grande Prairie.

Wes and I bought the old "Reed quarter in 1968 and moved on to it, but Wes started having health problems, therefore we decided to sell all our land except our home site where we still live. Wes was forced to have a heart operation in 1976 and then a complete hip replacement two years later, coming through both with flying colors. He enjoys bowling and curling with the Senior Citizens in the winter and in the summer we enjoy getting in the camper and doing a bit of travelling and fishing. We have been very fortunate that our family have always been close by so we have been able to enjoy our 13 grandchildren. I have never regretted leaving the city. Both Wes and I love this country and it's friendly people and this is where we intend to stay.

Don Talbot, Vince Talbot, Maud Praught

Don and Vince were both station agents at Wembley - Vince for a short time in 1927 and Don from 1931 to 1940.

They came to Canada from Minneapolis in 1919 when their mother died, to live with their uncle and aunt, Donald and Maud Praught, who were running a hotel in Clairmont at that time and had no children of their own. Donald Praught had been an engineer for the Northern Alberta Railways, but had lost a leg in a train accident, so he went into the hotel business. They moved to McLennan in the early twenties where they were also in the restaurant business. Don and Vince received their education there and went to work as assistant agents graduating to agents.

Vince came to Wembley as agent in 1927. Clark McCombs and Jack Swift were his assistant agents, as Wembley was a very busy station, due to the construction of the ED and BC Railroad to Hythe. Vince collapsed from overwork in 1928 and returned to McLennan. Harry Swift took over the agency then for a short time, being replaced by Jack Hardie. Jack moved to Pouce Coupe in 1931 after the railroad extended from Hythe to Dawson Creek, and Don Talbot bid in the Wembley agency.

When Don came to Wembley, Aunt Maud came to keep house for him as his Uncle Donald had passed away. Vince, who was out of work, also came to live with them, but only stayed for a few months. He then went back to Minneapolis, and went to work for Western Union



Maude Praught against building.

Telegraphs until he passed away of a heart attack in his early forties. He married and had two children.

Maud Praught (Aunt Maud as she was known by most) only stayed in Wembley for a couple of years, but was long remembered for her cheerful, outgoing personality and love of life. Having worked most of her life in hotels and restaurants, and being an excellent chef, life was too quiet for her in Wembley, so she went to Edmonton and went to work as a cook at the Golf and Country Club, and after that at various hotels and camps. She spent her last years at Pioneer Lodge in Grande Prairie, passing away at the age of 84.

Don was welcomed by the sportsminded community of Wembley. He was both a good hockey player and baseball pitcher. He also curled and coached the girl's softball team. He spent his falls hunting ducks and geese, a hobby which his brother-in-law Len Robertson (married to Edna Stokke) shared with him.

Don and Erna Stokke were married after she graduated from high school in 1934.



Erna and Don Talbot and Ken in Minneapolis, 1938.

They moved to Lac La Biche in 1940, but came back to Clairmont in 1944 where they lived the next couple of years. However, Clairmont was not a very busy station and the pay was poor, so they moved to McLennan for a time, then Waterways (Fort McMurray) where Don passed away from a heart attack in 1953 at the age of 45.

Of their four children, Ken is deceased, Dennis lives in MacKenzie, B.C. Lynne is Grande Prairie, and Shirley in Edmonton.

Henry Taylor Family

Henry Taylor arrived in Canada from Scotland with his parents, brothers and sisters, in the spring of 1928. Shortly after, Henry went to Pibrock, Alberta where he worked for an uncle for two years. On returning to the Wembley area, he worked for several years for William Craig who farmed three miles east of Wembley.

After the war began, Henry received basic army training in Grande Prairie. For some time he was stationed at various western Canadian army bases but later served in the Aleutian Islands and finally served in Western Europe.

Upon returning to the Wembley area after being discharged from the army in 1946, Henry purchased land from the Veterans Land Act. This farm had previously been owned by the Farquhar family. In 1947, Henry married Helen McNab of Two Rivers who had been teaching at Wembley for three years. They have three children, Donna who is a teacher, Lynne who is an accountant, and Craig who farms with his father.

The Henry Taylor family has been involved with a 4-H dairy club and has exhibited cattle at Dawson Creek and Grande Prairie fairs. Henry was a convener and later a director of the Grande Prairie County Agricultural Society for several years. In 1978, he was honored with a life membership by this organization.

The entire family has been interested in curling for many years and Craig has participated on local fastball and broomball teams.

Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Thompson

by Florence Adam

Oscar Thompson was born in North Dakota on December 15, 1897. As a youth of 13 years, he moved with his parents to Alberta (1910). Mrs. Thompson (nee Mary Helen MacGillivray) was born in Madison, South Dakota, April 11, 1901, and with her parents, moved to Alberta at age six months.

Oscar and Mary were married June 2, 1917. They farmed in the Sedalia and Camrose area until moving to the Peace River Country (Clairmont) in 1939. In February, 1943, they purchased the former Beatty farm (NW 24-71-8-W6, SW 25-71-8-W6 and SE 26-71-8-W6) located one mile north and two and a quarter miles east of Wembley town.

Four of their five children accompanied them; Joyce, Florence, Gilbert, and Sylvia, all of whom attended school in Wembley. The farm had been unoccupied for some time and took a lot of work trying to kill the quack grass. The old log house was a bit saggy and full of fox tail. It wasn't long before Mrs. Thompson had it clean and homey.

In 1947, the Thompsons built a new home replacing the original log house. It was a sad summer day (May) 1950, when their new home burnt to the ground. However,



Gilbert, Mary, Joyce, Oscar and Sylvia Thompson, 1950.

Oscar and Mary, with the help of good neighbours, rebuilt on the same site.

Due to rheumatic fever as a young man, Oscar's health began to fail in 1955, and he had to give up farming. About 1958, they sold the SE quarter to Tony Sebastian.

Oscar Thompson passed away in the Grande Prairie Hospital April 7, 1961, at age 63. He was survived by his wife Mary, daughters Viola (Mrs. T.) Pelling of Edmonton, Joyce (Mrs. H.G.) Thomson of Grande Prairie, Florence (Mrs. L.) Adam of Grande Prairie, one son Gilbert of Wembley, and one daughter Sylvia (Mrs. V.) Andruchow of Fort Nelson, also eleven grandchildren. Mrs. Thompson rented the farm out and moved to Grande Prairie. She sold the remaining half section to John and Phyllis Ruzesky in 1965.

Mrs. Thompson took up residence at Heritage Lodge in January, 1979 at age 78 years.



Florence Thompson, 1947.



Mr. and Mrs. Thomson about 1942 or 43.

The Thomson Family

by Jock Thomson

We came to Canada and to the end of the steel at Wembley, on April 10, 1927. All the family came together, leaving Scotland March 26, 1927, by boat: Parents, Alex and Margaret Thomson, and children Alex, Jock, Jessie, Andrew, Chris, Hank and Bob. Martin and Angus were born in Wembley.

Dad came out to Canada under the Soldier Settlement Board and got a quarter section of land two miles south of Wembley. Mother and Dad moved to Grande Prairie in the fall of 1953.

All the sons and Jessie have married except Chris. All have moved away, around Grande Prairie and Edmonton. I married Olive Crichton from Buffalo Lakes in 1935. We are now living at LaGlace. We came here from Wembley after the war and lived on a farm bought under the Veterans Land Act and still live here. We have three sons and three daughters.

My dad farmed with horses till Bob was old enough to farm, and then he used a tractor until he sold to Werner Stamp in 1953.

The Paul family came from Scotland on the same boat with the Thomsons. We were neighbours in Scotland and in Wembley.

On weekends during the summer we had a soccer team in Wembley and we had games on weekends with Grande Prairie, Beaverlodge, and Lake Saskatoon. In the winter we had house dances, and the one room schools were used for dances on the weekends at Mountain Trail, Dimsdale, Millarston, and Aspen Ridge. Archie McLelland was always there with his fiddle, and Johnnie McDougall with his fiddle.

Mother passed away in 1962, and Dad in 1969. Martin was killed in a car accident at Westlock, in 1967.

The Herman Trelle' Family

by Marie Trelle' Baynton

In 1899 the Andrew Trelle' family moved into Canada from the United States and settled in the Kootney and Crowsnest Pass area. Andrew had just returned to Spokane from the Yukon Gold rush in 1898 and wanted to head north to the "Land of Opportunity". He bought a hotel in Coleman, Alberta, where the family lived for a time, (his wife Marie, and their two children — Louise and Herman — seven and five years old respectively). Around 1900 they moved into a home at Frank, Alberta, where they were fortunate to survive the Frank slide of 1903 when part of Turtle Mountain broke away and tumbled down, burying the town of Frank. Andrew Trelle', a cabinet maker and carpenter, had the contract for the scaffolding in the mines, operated and owned a lumber mill and a hotel, and had a successful side business of constructing coffins and selling them on the spot! He became a naturalized Canadian citizen in 1905 at McLeod, Alberta.

In the winter of 1909-1910 Andrew moved his family into the Peace River country over the long winter trail, a 650 (plus or minus) mile trek, from Edmonton by way of Athabasca and Lesser Slave Lake. He took in a full line of machinery and homesteaded and bought scrip land in the Lake Saskatoon area, namely NE 26 and S½ 35-71-8-W6. A year later Andrew (Andy), acquired by proxy a homestead for his son Herman. (At later dates Herman added to his land holdings, finally acquiring 640 acres — W½ section 35, and W½ section 26, plus 40 acres of section 11 on Lake Saskatoon.



Mrs. Herman Trelle and their children.

Between 1911 and 1915 Herman travelled overland by foot from Lake Saskatoon to and from high school then to the University in Edmonton, seeking an Engineering degree. In 1913 he wrote his preliminary Dominion Land Survey Exams, and obtaining his diploma, allowing him to hire out for Field Survey work that summer, opening up new areas of the North in the Hays Lake region. In 1914 Herman entered the University of Alberta as an applied science student, — was a great success in oratory and athletics, and was a Rhodes nominee. He was also a member of the ROTC. World War I dimmed many hopes for Herman. Being an only son, he was exempted home to run the farm at Lake Saskatoon and learn his father's lumber business at Dawson Creek. By 1916 Herman had proved up on his own homestead at Lake Saskatoon and his dad had taught him all he could about the logging business. A short time later his dad chose to sell his lumber mill, and in 1917 Andrew and Marie Trelle' retired to Los Angeles, California. Herman took over the management of his father's holdings: livestock, a full line of machinery including the first gasoline tractor and threshing outfit in the area, all under a mortgage agreement.

In 1918 Herman joined the Royal Air Force and was home on harvest leave when the end of World War I was declared.

On Christmas Day in 1919 Herman married Beatrice Irene Burdick in the living room of her grand parents home in Rolla, B.C.

Beatrice was born March 10, 1901 in Fairmont, Minnesota, and came to live with her grandparents in St. Paul, Minnesota, after losing her mother at an early age. She came with them when they settled in Rolla, B.C. in 1914. Beatrice acquired a high school education through the efforts of a minister in Rolla, who instructed a class and arranged for them to take provincial exams, all by correspondence. During this time Herman came to know Beatrice while going about his father's lumber business in the Pouce Coupe — Dawson Creek area.

Herman and Beatrice then began farming in earnest, since continuing to pursue his engineerig degree was out of the question. They resided at the Andrew Trelle' home at Lake Saskatoon until March of 1922 when it was destroyed by fire, just one month before the birth of Marie Ellen, Herman's and Beatrice's daughter, and first child.

In 1924 Roy Kay was born at home on August 18, a very hot day. Dr. Carlisle again made it on time and Mrs. Scotty Smith stayed for a few days to help to take care of Kay and Marie while their mother Beatrice regained her strength.

Unfortunately, in the summer of 1929 Herman developed pneumonia while in Winnipeg, Manitoba. His condition became critical and on a check out he became a T.B. suspect. He was transported by train and escorted by a Registered nurse to the Keith Sanitorium at Keith, Alberta, where he remained a patient until the fall of 1930.

Again in 1932 Herman was back to the farm. He had acquired the Fred Walthew land to the south of his farm and he moved Fred's log house to a homesite just a few yards away from his temporary granary house which then became the bunk house, and housed the Delco electric plant supplying electricity to the Trelle' farm. The windows in the log house were formerly the windows in Bob Kranz's store at "the Lake".

Ronald, Herman's second son, was born at the log home in 1933 on April 3 during a blizzard that completely buried the house in snow. Marie and Kay stayed at Arthur Smith's during the event and again Dr. A.M. Carlisle was able to get there by horse and sleigh, in time.

In 1938 Herman bought Boyd Johnson's home in Wembley, just across from the school, and next to Bunyan's lovely home and yard. He put in his own septic tank and water pressure system, so that they had an automatic toilet that flushed and a tub that drained from their upstairs bathroom. Herman installed the electrical sytem. This the Trelle's were able to connect to the town's electric power. Progress had really made way.

Following the outbreak of World War II Herman enlisted in the Royal Canadian Engineers in 1940, and was stationed in Ottawa for about two years. He did geographical survey work but for health reasons he was discharged in 1942. At that time he acquired the position of inspector of gun mountings at the converted Canadian Pacific Railways shops in Calgary.

During the two years that Herman was in the service Beatrice boarded a couple of the Wembley school teachers and took an active part in the Wembley Anglican church. Kay continued his High School education, hired out as a stooker at harvest time for the Stokke's and became a good pool player. Ron continued at school and missed his father. Following high school Marie took a job as bookkeeper at the Royal Bank of Canada in Grande Prairie.

In the spring of 1942 the Trelle' family moved to Calgary to join Herman. Marie got a transfer in the bank to the main branch in Calgary, and Kay worked for the Express Company after school hours. Following his graduatin that June from high school Kay enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and took his pilot's training, only to have his complete class washed out just prior to graduation. He transferred to Bombadier School and served as a glider pilot until his graduation.

In 1943 Marie was accepted into the nursing program at the Calgary General Hospital, and in the spring of 1945, following the end of the war in Europe, Herman, Beatrice and Ronald moved to Southern California. Herman planned to retire and go back to univesity to get his engineering degree.

Hardly had he arrived in Los Angeles when he was asked by a prominent oil man to be foreman and overseer of his agricultural holdings in the Riverside and Fontana area. Herman accepted and was really happy with his work and pleased at the bright prospects of the "new ball game". Kay came down that summer from Canada while on terminal leave to visit his parents and was with his dad at one of the ranches when a previously fired foreman of that ranch shot Herman at close range with a shot gun. Marie was notified in Calgary, and left on the first plane out, for Los Angeles. While enroute she was told that her dad had died.

Herman died September 2, 1945 at the age of 50, from loss of blood. (The San Bernadino Hospital was unable to get his RARE type, an ironic situation. Herman had his Gold and Silver Red Cross pins for continued blood donations during World War II!)

Beatrice never remarried. She worked for many years for a masonry contractor in San Diego, California. She suffered a heart attack in 1958 and two years later passed away at Redwood City, California at the age of 59. She was buried, with all her family present, in Alta Mesa Cemetery in Palo Alto, California.

In 1946 Marie married an Air Force pilot, Don Baynton, who later became a dentist. Oceanside, California became their home where Don practiced dentistry for 18 years, and where their two children grew up. In 1969 Marie graduated from Palomar College Nursing School and passed her state exams to become a registered nurse 24 years after her nurses training at the Calgary General ended so abruptly. In 1976 Don accepted a teaching position in operative dentistry at the dental school at the University of Texas at San Antonio, Texas. Both he and Marie are very happy in their new surroundings and lovely home at Fair Oaks Ranch.

Following World War II Kay became a very successful aeronautics engineer working on different project for Hiller, Convair, Ampex, Lockhead, and Boeing. Since the mid seventies Kay's engineering endeavors have been centered about the cycletron at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, B.C., where he and his wife Mae have their home.

Ronald Trelle' became an electronics engineer and has been with Hewlett Packard for many years. His four children are married, and he and his wife Jessie live at Sebastapol, California.

W. T. Turner Story

I was the first railroad agent in Wembley. In late October 1924, I went in on the first train, unlocked the doors and we were open for business. I started with the Canadian Pacific Railroad down in Manitoba in 1912 and after a jaunt overseas, I was discharged from the army on April 1, 1919 and three weeks later, was back with Canadian Pacific Railroad.

November, 1919, I was working a night job at English River, Ontario, and glanced through the Winnipeg Free Press work ads column and noticed the Edmonton Hudson Bay Company Railway needed some men, so I wired them and they said they would hold a job for me. I wired my resignation to Canadian Pacific Railroad and stopped off at Beausejour, Manitoba, for Christmas; then on to Edmonton and started as night operator at Dunvegan Yards.

Wembley was just a piece of farm land when the steel moved out of Grande Prairie. The railroad company bought the town site and sold lots. Lake Saskatoon was the town at that time. Each morning I would look out the office window and here would be another building from Lake Saskatoon, on skids, and coming across the open fields, pulled by from twelve to twenty horses, depending on the size of the building. By the time all the snow had left in the spring of 1925, all of Lake Saskatoon had been moved except the old log buildings not fit to be moved.

There was an old homesteader, Edward (Windy) Waddell, whose land cornered the townsite and there was a slough on it. When it froze over, we used it as a skating rink for winter of 1924 - 1925. The homesteader came from Wembley, England.

I remained with the railway for 40 years before retiring December 31, 1959.

Agent Matthews (Matty) followed me to Wembley, but there was a spare relief agent between us for a short time. I think it may have been one of the Swifts. The conductor on the first train was Jack Carley and engineer Carl Gage.

Reverend Mr. Rogers and family moved to Wembley in the fall of 1925. My family and I left around November 1, 1926 for Berwyn, where a plastered station was in use.

The Ernest Voss Family

Ernest (Ernie) Voss, son of Mr. and Mrs. Datlief Voss and Erna Lange, daughter of Adolph and Elizabeth Lange came to Canada from Germany as young children with their parents and families and settled in Medsted, Saskatchewan area. Erna and Ernie were married here in 1940. They had two children, a set of twins, Rudy and Betty.

Ernie and Erna with their two children moved to the Wembley area in 1949 and bought a quarter section from

Hank Stokke. This quarter was two miles east of Wembley, adjoining the Hank Stokke land.

The Voss family lived in the Wembley area for only a couple of years. They moved into Grande Prairie where Erna took up hairdressing which she continued to do for a great many years. Ernie continued to farm the land and work out during the winter.

Later they bought land north of the Grande Prairie Airport where they farmed until Ernie passed away in 1973.

Erna is now living in Kelowna, B.C. Rudy is a Dental Mechanic and lives in Grande Prairie with his wife Jennet and three children. Betty married Jim Orr and they have two girls. They are in Vancouver where Jim teaches at University of B.C.

Edward Waddell

Edward, son of Henry and Dorothy Waddell, of Norton le Clay, Yorkshire, England, was born January 10, 1866. He died at Wembley, Alberta, May 8, 1936.

His place of residence was the south 50.1 acres of NW 15-71-8-W6, which, according to the land titles records had been homesteaded by Billy Bruce, filed on October 18, 1910. Later records show that this quarter was divided, Waddell having the south 50.1 acres and Bruce the north 70.2 acres as a soldier's grant in 1918, so contrary to local stories, the original site of Wembley was on Billy Bruce's land. The remaining part of the quarter was slough.

Edward Waddell homestead, NE 15-71-8-W6, filing October 20, 1910, and receiving title in 1917.

He will always be remembered for his large rhubarb patch, from which people came and purchased rhubarb.

When this was the end of steel in 1924, and they were searching for a name, it was the time of the Wembley Exhibition in England and Mr. Waddell suggested the new hamlet be called Wembley.

The Sherman Wagar Family

Sherman Wagar was born in Deloraine, Ontario on February 4, 1880, and educated in Enterprise, Ontario. He later attended Technical School at Calgary, Alberta and received diplomas in welding and steam engineering. He also attended Technical School in Edmonton where he received a diploma in first class motor mechanics. There were five children in the family, three boys and two girls.

The call of the West lured Sherman to the harvest fields of Manitoba. He returned home to Enterprise for a short while, but soon became restless and told his parents that he was going back to the harvest fields and steam engines. His eyes would just light up when the old steam engines would start up.

He later carried on his journey westward and took a homestead at Bonnyglen. It was here that he began his career of drilling water wells that continued to interest him until his retirement. He travelled to Wetaskiwin and the surrounding area to do his work.

It was in Wetaskiwin that he met his future wife, Margaret Ann Gibson. Margaret (Annie, she referred to herself as), was born in Oxenden, Ontario on May 3, 1881 and moved west to Wetaskiwin with her family consisting of five children, three boys and two girls. On a beautiful, warm spring day, May 3, 1906, Margaret and Sherman were married in Wetaskiwin. This was an extra special day for Margaret since this was her twenty-fourth birthday, as well.



Wedding Day of Margaret Ann Gibson and Sherman Wagar, May 3, 1906, Wetaskiwin, Alberta.

The happy couple made their first home at Sherman's homestead in Bonnyglen. Margaret enjoyed it there, however, it was very lonely as Sherman was away drilling most of the time. Two years later their son, Earl, was born. the family moved into Wetaskiwin and were joined by another son, John. Some years later, they were blessed with a daughter,Arabelle Jean. During the time that the family resided in Wetaskiwin, Sherman opened a welding shop. In addition to his well drilling business, the welding shop kept him very busy.

Sherman heard about the Peace River country opening up and, once again, answered the call to travel. So, in 1926, he came North, shipping his drilling equipment by train. The first well he drilled was the the Dairy Pool at Falher. He returned to Wetaskiwin that fall to sell their home, pack up his family and bring them North.

The Wagar family stayed at the Donald Hotel until Sherman built their first home, east of the Post Office in Wembley. One of Sherman's first tasks was to drill a water well. The well still remains in operation on the site today, thanks to Mr. and Mrs. C. Penney, who reside there.

Wembley was a thriving community at the time that Mr. and Mrs. Wagar arrived there. The railway was completed as far as Hythe. Sherman carried on to make his name synonymous with well drilling in both the north and south Peace and into the B.C. block along the Alaska Highway.

Margaret, Sherman, and family, also purchased a farm six miles south of Wembley. Animals could be found in abuandance on their farm. Sherman enjoyed the sport of hunting. Since this was the beginning of the Hungry Thirties, his family welcomed the meat he brought home.

Margaret spoke of walking out to the farm to do the chores in much the same way we speak of walking six city blocks, today.

The Wagar family had a great love for music. Margaret played the piano from the time she was three years old and was never taught a note. In later years, Sherman bought her an accordian which she was still able to squeeze some music out of at ninety-three years of age. Arabelle was able to convince her dad to make a violin for her. This has been one of her most treasured possessions over the years. He then carried on to make several once he became interested, even to the point of having some for sale purposes.

Margaret and Sherman's family increased when Earl married Mary Simms and had four children; John married Herta Schmidt and had one child; and Arabelle married Willy Schmidt and had two children. Margaret and Sherman dearly loved their grandchildren and derived a great deal of pleasure from thier visits. Sherman often recalled the time he was building a dog house and hadn't yet cut the hole for the door. One of his young grandsons had just completed a very thorough inspection of the project and said, very thoughtfully, "How does the dog get in, Grandpa? He apparently thought that was an oversight on Grandpa's part that really should be pointed out to him.

Sherman drilled his last well for Gyda Romkey at the age of 80. He decided that was maybe time to consider retirement. Fortunately, he had ten years to enjoy gardening which was a love that both Margaret and Sherman shared. Many people in Wembley will recall the raspberries they grew and, in later years, strawberries. They also, loved their pets, especially dogs, very much. It was a familiar sight to see Sherman out working in his garden, chatting away to his dog. Sherman passed away just a few days from 90 years of age.

After Sherman's death, Margaret moved to her daughter's farm south of Wembley, where she resided for six years until her death in 1976 at the age of 94.

Sherman and Margaret are both laid to rest at the Grande Prairie cemetery. So comes the close to a chapter. Sherman and Margaret had a life well lived and a rest well earned.



Great Grandma Wagar, May 3, 1974, 93 years young.

The Donald Watson Family

by Don Watson

I was born in 1932, to William and Catherine (Taylor) Watson, on a farm located at NE 9-71-8-W6, one mile southwest of Wembley. the farm had been originally homesteaded by my uncle, John Finlay Watson.

The thirties were no different for the Watson's than other people in this part of the country. The work was hard and the money was scarce. I remember getting paid for some eggs with a two dollar bill, which seemed like a tremendous amount of money.

I enjoyed growing up on the farm. There was always lots of pet cats, chickens, calves and colts to amuse a youngster. Coal and wood heat wasn't the most enjoyable at times. Waking up in the morning would find frost on the blankets by your mouth, and if water was left in the kettle, it would have turned to ice.

I started school about 1939 in Wembley. The Farquhar kids were some of the ones I had for company while walking to town. Ordering my first bike from Eaton's catalogue was big excitement, even though I had to replace the seat with a cushion to reach the pedals. I had a variety of teachers over the years, each one had a uniqueness of their own. I believe Doreen Feist was the first, Mr. Rigby was real keen on teaching math. My aunt Helen, who taught in Wembley, and I drove a team and cutter to school a few winters. Some mornings your hands would be so cold you couldn't unsnap the lines or unzip your parka. The snow on the roads would cover the fence posts, as snow removal equipment wasn't very plentiful.

It was about 1944 when Dad decided he could no longer make it in farming. We sold the farm to Otto Kopp and moved into Wembley. Dad worked for Bunyan's for a while, and then in 1946 he took over the United Farmers of Alberta oil agency. I was quite disappointed because I thought I would like to farm, when I was older. As it was, I spent after school, weekends and most holidays at Grandma Taylor's farm. I developed a great love for horses during this time. When I was about 15, Allen Jensen and I took on to drive a stook team on Taylors threshing outfit. I enjoyed it so much I drove one myself for about the next three years.

We usually started at seven in the morning and if we wanted to finish a field would go until nine at night. It was hard work but most enjoyable, and besides I was out of school for most of September.

During my high school years I was very active in curling and fastball. One rink of Willard Nickel, Fred Perdue, Ethel Cameron and I had good success in bonspiels at different centres around here. We usually came home with a trophy or prize of some kind. I decided to leave



Christmas 1962: Brent, Brenda, Elaine. Grandad Watson in background.

school just after starting my first year of grade 12. My first year out of school I worked for my uncle Harry Taylor on the farm.

By July, 1952, like a lot of 19 year olds, I was undecided what I wanted to do with my life. There were quite a few recruiting teams around, so Bobby McRae and I decided to join the Royal Canadian Air Force. Bobby was quite large for his age, so Jim Farquhar, Wolf Rautenstrauch and I agreed that if Bobby didn't pass his medical I would return and the three of us would join the Army. We had to go to Edmonton for our induction tests, as luck would have it I passed, but Bobby was to return home for 30 days to lose some weight. I debated what to do, I finally decided to go on alone.

It was during one of my leaves from the service, that I became acquainted with a young lady, Louella Cameron, who was to have quite an influence on the rest of my life. We kept in touch by letter and phone until my return from the service in June, 1955. I went to work for my dad, in the United Farmers of Alberta service station, for the large sum of $180 a month.



Donald and Louella: Our wedding day 1956. Grannie Taylor in background.

Louella and I were married in 1956. The first winter we spent in a little house on skids, with straw bales around it. It wasn't much, but we were happy. Brent was the first addition to our family in 1957. That year also saw the coming of water and sewer to Wembley. It was quite a change from the old water barrel in the corner of the kitchen that Frank Unger used to fill, at five cents a pail.

My dad turned the service station over to Doug Keown in 1958. I went to work for John Bunyan then, who had the hardware store and Massey Harris parts as well. In late 1959, I went to work in a service station in Grande Prairie.

When 1960 rolled around, we were to welcome the second addition to our family, a daughter, Elaine. I went to work for Firestone stores when they opened up in Grande Prairie. The year 1962 saw the final addition to our family when a daughter, Brenda, was born. That same year I came back to Bunyan's store to work. I stayed there until he closed the business in 1965. I returned to Grande Prairie to work in the Co-op Store, but we remained living in Wembley. The year 1968, saw me going to work for Gordon Newell in the Atlas auto parts warehouse, where I was to remain until 1973. After my dad passed away in 1969, we rented the Bill McRae farm yard from Werner Stamp who owned it then, and Mother moved into our little house on main street.

In 1973 when we heard that Mr. Cecil Penney was going to retire from the Post Office, I decided to apply for the position and was lucky enough to be accepted. We purchased the building from Mr. Penney, and moved back to town in the spring of 1973. After driving back and forth to work for so many years, it certainly was a relief to walk from one room to another to go to work.

When Mother passed away in 1974, we sold our little house to Pete Christofferson; it had served us well. On looking back, I must say life has been good to us. I am a little disappointed I didn't get to try my hand at farming, but we can't have everything. I remember the Sunday get-together's we used to have on the farm. Friends and neighbours used to come, the men would play horseshoe, the kids ball games, and many other activities. The highlite would be a feed of homemade ice cream. My dad used to cut ice from the lake in winter, and store it in a shed packed in saw dust, for use all summer.

We are thankful though, for the good family we have, and we all enjoy good health as well.

Brent married Carrie Grotkowski in 1980, they live in Grande Prairie. He works with North Western Utilities; she works at the hospital.

Elaine married Ray Aldred in 1979 and they live in Grande Prairie. He works at North Canadian Forest Industries. Brenda will finish school in 1980, and will probably be working in Grande Prairie as well.

The saying goes, life must go on. Louella and I will soon be back where we started almost 25 years ago.

They have been good years and we have some close friends to rely on, so we are looking forward to the next 25 years.

John Finlay Watson

by Agnes Campbell

Finlay was born September 16, 1891 in County Down, Northern Ireland. He came to Canada with his parents Mr. and Mrs. John Watson in 1908. He was the oldest of the family of nine children.

The family first settled in Edmonton at Bonny Doon. Finaly worked for Dalton Dairy of Edmonton for a while. He then heard the call of the north as the Peace River was opened up for homesteaders. He went with Dad, leaving in January with caboose and oxen loaded with supplies, by the long trail over Lesser Slave Lake and across to Grouard to file on a homestead picked out for them earlier by G.M. Smith and Sons.

The next trip was made in March, 1911, by way of the uncompleted Edson Trail which was shorter but through muskeg, bush, and steep hills with many hardships. It took two months for the trip, but they had at last found their "promised land".

When World War I broke out in 1914, Finlay joined the 66 Battalion at Grande Prairie. He had a cousin, Harry McGill, who also came and filed on a homestead near Wembley. They joined up together, but when they got overseas, Finaly was transferred to the Gordon Highlanders. Harry was killed at the front line, giving out rations to the soldiers, and was blown to pieces, just two weeks before the end of the war. Finlay was at the front and in the trenches for two years. He was wounded and taken to England.

Finlay went with a girl in Edmonton before the war, and they were married before he left to go to the war. She



Finlay Watson taken at the corner of Kranz's store.

came to Grande Prairie after the war. They had no family.

After the war, he came back to farm at Wembley. He took a soldiers script near his other quarter. He owned a threshing machine and threshed in the neighbourhood. He also had a breaking plough and did a lot of breaking for neighbours around Wembley.

In World War II, he was stationed at Ozada or Lethbridge looking after prisoners of war, when he had a heart attack and passed away. His friend, Bob McMaster, came on the train with his remains. The burial was at Lake Saskatoon Cemetery.

The John Watson Family

by Agnes (Watson) Campbell

In May 1908, leaving their old home in County Down, Ireland, Mr. and Mrs. John Watson and family sailed to Canada. They first settled in Edmonton with their family of nine; Finlay, William, Robert, Violet, Jean, Sydney, Margaret, Emily, and Agnes.

In 1910 when the Peace River Country was opening up, Dad, Finlay, and Bill rigged up a covered wagon and with an ox team, started over the long trail by Lesser Slave Lake and Athabasca and across to Grouard to file on three quarters of land by proxy. The land was located near where Wembley is now — NW, NE,SE 9-71-8-W6.

The next trip was made March, 1911, via the uncompleted Edson Trail which was shorter but through muskeg and bush. There were other outfits travelling along with team and they could double up on the rough places. Finlay had his violin for company.

After a month or more travel, they left the bush behind and viewed the vast expanse of rolling country with the Rocky Mountains in the distance. Dad described it as the Promised Land.

On July 1, 1916, Sports Day, the year the Edmonton, Dunvegan and B.C. Railway reached Grande Prairie, Mother, Dad, Sidney, Margaret, Emily, and Agnes arrived. Bill met us with a "Studebaker" wagon and big team of horses to take us to our destination, 16 miles west of Grande Prairie.

It was hot and dusty as it hadn't rained all summer. We picked tiger lilies on Richmond Hill as the horses rested. The big log cabin had a board floor, homemade table with oilcloth on it and benches to sit on, cupboards and a big arm chair by the little four-holed cook stove, and a shelf above it. There were big homemade beds with straw-filled mattresses and big Hudson Bay blankets.

We were initiated into the country with a four day rain. The sod roof was so dry it leaked. We kids had fun catching the drips. It was like a holiday for us but not so for Mother who had to cope with all the inconveniences. She was also glad to be with Dad. It was the time of World War I, and our boys and friends were enlisting. I remember seeing so many troops marching through the streets in Edmonton ready to leave for training camps and overseas.

The year we came, the saskatoons at the Island were especially good. We all loaded up in the wagon and had a picnic at the Island. It was no time until we had a washtub full of saskatoons.

Dad, who was born in Ireland in 1862, was known as Honest John Watson. As more families settled, he helped form the Hillhead School District. We had a temporary school in a bachelors shack near the creek on the Lower Beaverlodge trail. It was owned by Myrhan Stewart who had gone to war. Margaret McNaught was the first teacher and grades ranged up to grade eight. She boarded with us. Dad fixed up a little granary for a room for her. It even had a carpet, Winnipeg couch, and a piano.



Mr. and Mrs. John Watson with family before coming to Grande Prairie in 1908.
Seated: Jean, John, Emily in front, Margaret, Agnes on knee, Jane, Violet.
Standing: Sid, Bill, Finlay, Bert.

The new school was built half a mile from Dad's corner across the road on land owned then by Conleys and later Purves'. The school was the centre of all the social activities. It was also used for Church and Dad started a Sunday School. It was later moved to Wembley.

Besides serving on the Council for the Rural Municipality of Bear Lake #740, Dad was also active on the Agricultural Fair Board. As a member of the Masonic Lodge, he drove to meetings with Bill Pearcy to Lake Saskatoon.

My mother, who as Jane Marrow was born in Ireland in 1863. She was skilled in midwifery and with limited

hospital facilities, was called upon to go on maternity cases in the district with Dr. M.L. McDonald and later with Dr. A.M. Carlisle.

Our log house was added to with lumber, and painted, and became known as the house with the green roof by the side of the road. Mother always had a cheery welcome for weary travellers. To everyone, she was affectionately known as Granny Watson. The Bible says a merry heart doeth good like a medicine.

Dad passed away in 1924 with cancer, at the age of 62. The oldest son, Finlay, bought a house in Wembley where Mother lived with him for a few years. She enjoyed trips to Vancouver and Cloverdale in the spring. She also had a trip back to Ireland with a cousin in 1929.

The Herald Tribune of September 16, 1948 reported: On Friday September 10, funeral services were held for Mrs. Watson at Wembley United Church, conducted by Reverend Art Boorman assisted by Reverend C.G. Kitney of Grande Prairie. The full church and masses of fall flowers were evidence of the affection inspired by Granny Watson in all who had the privilege of knowing her. Granny Watson did a good deal more than be centre of her home. With hospital facilities limited, she brought help and courage to many mothers who never forgot how comforted they were by her calm confidence and cheery smile always enlivened by a ready Irish wit which never forsook her even in later days of suffering. She was laid to rest in Lake Saskatoon Cemetery beside her husband who predeceased her by 24 years.



Grannie Watson, taken on her 84th birthday, 1947.

Finlay passed away at Lethbridge while taking care of prisoners of war during the second world war on February 2, 1945.

William (Bill) passed away at home in Wembley in October 1969.

Robert (Bert) passed away in Grande Prairie hospital in 1974.

Daughters Violet, Mrs. Keys, lives in a nursing home in Kelowna, and Jean (Taylor) resides at Cloverdale, B.C. Sidney passed away at Oliver, B.C. November 4, 1979. Emily (Vagt) passed away at Grande Prairie on February 23, 1980. Margaret (Chalmers) passed away at Little Rock, Arkansas. Agnes (Mrs. Ray Campbell) lives in Grande Prairie.

Robert Watson

by Agnes Campbell

Robert was born July 16, 1894 in County Down, Northern Ireland. He came to Canada with his parents Mr. and Mrs. John Watson in 1908. He was the third son of the family of nine children.

They first settled in Edmonton at Bonny Doon. He went to high school in Strathcona, then to McTavish business college. He then worked for Killen and Gilbert Real Estate for a number of years.

When World War One broke out, he enlisted in the 202nd Battalion. Overseas, he was transferred to the artillery. He won a medal for saving a machine gun from burning.

He came to Grande Prairie after the war as the rest of the family were there then. He got a job at the Beaverlodge Experimental Station bookkeeping for a number of years. In World War Two, he was stationed at Grande Prairie in the Sergeant's quarters. He ordered supplies for the soldiers who were stationed there.

Later, he worked in the Land Office in Grande Prairie, then for the Government Appraiser for Prairie Farm Assistance.

He went on some trips by bus to the United States, and he made a trip back to the old country.

He retired at Wembley and was always interested in the football games and sports on television.

Bert (Robert) passed away in the Grande Prairie Hospital on November 30, 1974.

William George Watson

William (Bill) was born May 15, 1893 in County Down, Northern Ireland. He was the second son of the family of nine children. He came to Canada with his parents Mr. and Mrs. John Watson in 1908 (March 26). They sailed on the ship "Lake Manitoba" landing at Halifax. Then they boarded the train for Edmonton making their home at Bonny Doon.

The call of the north came again when the Peace River country was opening up. Bill's dad and brother Finlay went first over the long trail by Peace River and Dunvegan with oxen and covered wagon. Bill left Edmonton September 21, 1911, shipping to Edson by railroad, with Lorne and Arthur Smith, their settlers effects, horses, cattle, and machinery. They left Edson on September 26, 1911 and arrived at Lake Saskatoon on October 26, 1911.

The land they filed on was located near where Wembley is now — NW, NE, and SE 9-71-8-W6. It was a beautiful location sloping southward to the foothills with the Rocky Mountains on the horizon. Bill said it seemed like a different world, nearly 60 years later, than it was in the earlier settler's days.

In 1931, Bill was married to Catherine Taylor, who came to Canada from Scotland in 1928, and they settled southeast of Wembley, on the farm where Bill's dad, John Watson, had lived at Hillhead. They had one son, Donald, born in 1932, and an adopted daughter, Diane, born in 1943. They farmed until 1944, then sold the farm to Otto Kopp and moved to Wembley. Bill operated the United Farmers of Alberta Gas Station until 1958, at which time he semi-retired.

Katie and Bill were real good curlers. Bill was president for a while and made the ice. When the new rink was opened in Grande Prairie, the bonspeil was on and they

asked Katie to throw the first rock. They said you don't have to get it on the button, but she did!

Bill was the champion horseshoe pitcher. Always at the Old Timers Picnic, you could find Bill at the pits.

Bill passed away suddenly October 20, 1969. Katie passed away July 15, 1974. Donald still resides in Wembley. Diane is married to Steve Wolanuk and resides in Elk Point, Alberta. They have two children.



Left to Right: Donald, Bill, Kate, Diane, 1968.



Bill and Kate Watson's wedding, 1931.
Ceil Taylor, bridesmaid, Tommy Taylor, best man.

The Dan Willsey Family

by Anne Willsey

William Daniel Willsey, better known as Dan, was born in Brock, Saskatchewan and came to Lake Saskatoon Trading Post when he was four years old. Having started school at six, he was left to board with Mr. and Mrs. Slim Finch when his parents moved to the Wembley area. Granny Finch got a real kick out of telling how she took the buggy whip to young Dan for using a pet swear expression of hers. He spent his growing up years going to school at Lower Beaverlodge some five miles from



Dan and Melvin Willsey chopping grain at Schadecks.

home and helping out on the farm south of Huallen. During his early twenties, he met Anne Childs, who was employed at the Nelson Clow store and Post Office. Anne always says she chased him for four years before he finally caught her. They were married in Wembley by Rev. K.L. Sandercock in 1939 in St. Mathew's Church. This little church was later moved to Pipestone Creek where it still stands.

A daughter Margaret was born on the farm at Aspen Dale during a late spring blizzard. Without the capable hands of Mrs. Ernest Breitkreutz Sr., they are sure their tiny daughter would not have survived. What wonderful neighbours they had.

Dan was driving a truck during the early war years, only helping with seeding and harvesting at home. At that time, the airport was expanded and supplies were needed on the Alaska Highway. About this same time, the Nelson Clows decided to move to a warmer climate and suggested Anne as the Huallen Postmistress. Her application was accepted and she served the Huallen district for the next four years.

A son James, or Jimmy, was born in December shortly after her appointment in November, 1943. In January, 1944, Dan joined the Army and was sent overseas with the Saskatoon Light Infantry in December, 1944. After a short stay in England, he was sent to Holland and later spent eleven months with the Army of Occupation in Germany. During this time, he met his brother Melvin and they were fortunate enough to return home on the same boat in June, 1946.

Following his discharge, Dan bought a truck and spent the next 17 years more away from home than at home. In March, 1947, the family moved to Wembley where two more children, a son Gerald in 1947, and a daughter Marilyn in 1951, were born.



Jerry, Marilyn, Margaret, Jimmy, Anne and Dan Willsey, 1979.

While in Wembley, Dan served on the Village Council for two years and acted as mayor for five years. He was a strong advocator for the bringing in of gas and was extremely pleased to hear his dream was realized. He was the coach for the Little League Ball team which was quite an undertaking in those days when there weren't too many vehicles to take the boys around. He was an avid curler and supporter of all sports.

Both Dan and Anne were involved in community affairs. She was superintendent of St. Alban's Sunday School for years, active in the Women's Auxiliary, and Home and School. Both were strong supporters of Civil Defence, and even square danced.

Dan gave up trucking and worked for four years for the Wembley Department Store. He then decided to go to Grande Prairie to work for North Canadian Forest Industries as a bush foreman, where he worked for eleven years, the latter three as Safety Co-ordinator.

In 1975 during a big cut back by the company, Dan's job was phased out and he went to work as a professional driver for the Canadian Army Forces at C.F.S. Beaverlodge.

Anne was employed at Curry's Jewellers for the past 16 years so the family again moved — this time to Grande Prairie where they lived until their retirement in September, 1979.

Daughter Margaret is married to Blair Hommy and lives at Rio Grande. She has five children — Marianne, married to Lyle Osborne and living in Grande Prairie; Patsy, working in Grande Prairie; Danny, married to Sandra Sample and living at Beaverlodge; Jimmy and Shelly going to school and at home.

Son Jimmy is married to Janice Thiessen and is employed at Northern Metallic. They have three children all at home — Bradley, Kimberly, and Kevin.

Son Jerry is married to Elaine Webber and is employed by North Canadian Forest Industries as a logging foreman. They have two children at home — Chad and Tara. Jerry has come full circle as he has just bought a new home in Wembley and had moved back to his birthplace.

Daughter Marilyn is married to Ches Henderson, a Master corporal with the Canadian Armed Forces. At present, they are stationed in Kamloops, B.C. They have one daughter, Dawn, who was born in Labrador. This pleased her grandfather who is a Newfoundlander.

Dan and Anne are starting a new life in a warmer climate, near a golf course, and extend a cordial welcome to any of their old friends to stop in for a visit at Chase, B.C.

James A. Wood

by Floyd VanSchaick

I met Jim in the early 1930's. He had a garage west of Kranz's store. Jim Rickerby had a blacksmith shop in the same building. Times were bad, but Jim did the best he could. The shop later burned down.

He was on the church board and took up the offering and was generally at his place in church on Sunday.

After the war there came a time when lumber was in demand and a lot of people, who had a tractor, bought a saw mill. The lumber was trucked to Wembley, Dimsdale, and other towns to be planed.

Jim worked for others for a time and was able to get a couple of dollars together. As well as being a good mechanic, he was a steam engineer. So like many other, he set up his own mill with a steam engine across the Wapiti, on Bald Hill. However, the winter was hard and water gave out; so what with hauling water, paying help, and things in general; Jim was soon out of a job.

Sometime later, a few of us gathered for his funeral. The men acted as bearers. Two sisters, I think, came from Dawson Creek. It seemed to us all that we had not done much for our friend.

The Finlay Yeats Family

by Winnifred Yeats

I, Winnifred Graham Yeats was born in 1891. Finlay Watson Yeats of Elgin, Scotland and I were married in January, 1921. We then went to Lake Saskatoon on January 8, and lived in that area for almost six glorious years, as manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

The two things of greatest interest were the rail line reaching Wembley and the removal of Lake Saskatoon homes, businesses, etc., all being moved to Wembley.

Of all that wonderful group, the only people with whom I have contact are Dr. and Jean Carlisle who live here in Victoria.

After leaving Wembley, we moved to Stony Plain, then to Claresholm, where my husband retired in 1949, and died in 1951. I stayed on there until 1954, then moved to Victoria, B.C.

We have one son who spent 25 years in the navy. He and his wife and three sons are in Victoria.

I don't get out a great deal, as I have a bad hip and my eyesight is a very bad handicap.

The John Cecil Young Family

Cecil was born at Ronthwaite, Manitoba in 1904, moving with his parents and two brothers to Lone Butte, Alberta. He attended Technical School in Calgary and went back to Lone Butte to farm. He married Dorothy Sibbick, who came from the Isle of Wight, England. Dorothy and Cecil had six children, four boys and two girls. Their daughter Alma died in 1930.

The Young's moved to the Peace River country in 1931, where they homesteaded at Gundy on the Alberta and B.C. border. In 1940 Cecil worked for the Canada Colonization, a branch of the C. P. Railway, instructing the immigrants at Tomslake, in the use of farm machinery. The next year they moved to Lake Saskatoon, to run the Herman Trelle farm. During the winter of 1944, Cecil worked on the Alaska Highway and in 1945, the family moved to the town of Wembley, and went into the lumber business, south of the Wapiti.



Back row: Mrs. Whaley, Mrs. Dodds, Mrs. Young.
Front row: Mrs. Brink, Mrs. Cameron, Mrs. McLean.

Dorothy was active in church and community affairs. They lived in Wembley until 1950, when they moved to Dawson Creek, to continue on in the lumber business.

The eldest son Bert was in the Royal Canadian Navy. Upon his discharge, he married Phyllis Dodds, and went to work for the N. A. R. Bert and Phyllis have three daughters and one son. The youngest daughter lives at home, the others are married living in Edmonton area. There are two grandsons and two granddaughters. The Bert Youngs live in St. Albert and he now works for Greyhound.

Jack and his wife, Joyce, live in Chetwynd, B.C. Jack is in the trucking business. They have four sons, one daughter and two grand-daughters.

Bill and his wife, Avis, live in Dawson Creek. They have three sons and one grandson. Bill has recently retired from the lumber business and has an interest in Bumper to Bumper Stores in Dawson Creek and Chetwynd, in partnership with the youngest brother Larry.

Larry and Yvonne live in Dawson Creek, and have one son and one daughter.

Joan and her husband George Morris live in Calgary. They have three sons, one daughter, and one grandson.

Dorothy Young passed away on October 6, 1971 and was laid to rest in the Dawson Creek Cemetery. Cecil has remarried, and he and his wife Jean, live in Valemount, B.C. where he has retired from the lumber business.

Robert Beaman

Robert Beaman filed on NW 21-71-8-W6 on August 16, 1910, proved up and received his title in 1915.

Jim Smith later purchased this land, and it is now owned by Akin Acres.

John Otto Bjornson

John Bjornson filed on NW 3-71-8-W6, on February 4, 1915, proved up and received title in 1919. Nothing else is known about him.

G. and H. Stamp now own this land.

Ben Boyd

Ben Boyd filed on SE 10-71-8-W6 on August 16, 1910, proved up and received title in 1915.

He joined the army in World War I and was killed overseas on October 9, 1916.

This land is now owned by A. Kirscht.

Charles Boyd

Charles Boyd filed on SW 9-71-8-W6 on July 11, 1912, proved up and received title in 1916.

He married a girl from B.C., left the country in the early 1920's, came back in 1928, stayed three years and left again. He is now dead.

This land is now owned by K. & M. Dwernychuk.

Joseph Boyd

Joseph Boyd filed on SW 10-71-8-W6 on May 26, 1910, proved up and received title in 1914.

He married a school teacher from Lake Saskatoon. Mr. Boyd served in World War I and was wounded overseas. He left the country in the early 1920's and is now dead.

This land is now owned by Stamps.

Frank M. Coates

Frank Coates filed on SE 28-71-8-W6 on April 13, 1915 proved up and got his title in 1928.

He stayed at the Hudson's Bay Post at Lake Saskatoon, then served in the army in World War I.

The Herman Meyers family now live on this quarter.

Gordon Cox

Gordon Cox filed on NW 14-71-8-W6 on July 15, 1911, proved up and received title in 1914.

He left the country in about 1920.

Daniel Dean

On one set of records it shows Dan Dean homesteaded NW 16-71-8-W6, and on another set that John Malcolm (Silvertip) Campbell filed on it on May 26, 1910. Title was received in 1914.

Dan was a brother to Rose Myer and Jake Dean.

This land is now owned by A. Kirscht.

Joseph George Flood

Joe Flood filed on NE 3-71-8-W6 on May 16, 1914, proved up and received title in 1917.

Mr. Flood passed away in the late 1930's leaving his wife and three sons; Louis, Joe Jr. and George. George was missing in action overseas in World War II, the other boys have since died.

Mrs. Flood later married Jack Patterson of Grande Prairie.

A. Kirscht now owns this land.

Harry and Maud Frank

by J. Goertzen

Maud and Harry Frank came to the Valhalla Centre area in 1917 from Williston, North Dakota, to take up a homestead and engage in trapping. Harry Frank was a cousin to Jonas Webber's dad.

In the late 1940's they sold their farm to Audmund Gleason and moved to Wembley to retire, where they remained until their death somewhere inthe 1960's.

As they had no family, there are no known relatives and very little is known about them.

James E. Howard

Mr. Howard had the E½-14-71-8-W6. This was a South African Script that he got June 8, 1911, receiving title in 1915.

Mr. Howard later died, and his widow married Alex Muir.

This land is now owned by Stokkes.

Joseph Hugor (Aagor)

It is not clear which way this name is spelled, but he filed on NE 10-71-8-W6 on January 15, 1912, proved up and received his title in 1915.

All that is known about him is that he was a preacher.

This land is now owned by R.W. Sieker.

Joseph Lavier Jensen

Lavier Jensen filed on SE 2-71-8-W6 and received title in 1930, but did not live on this land.

Arvid Olsson now owns this quarter.

John Alfred Johnston

John Johnston filed on SE 3-71-8-W6 on August 16, 1910, proved up and received title in 1915.

All that is known about him is that he was called Swearing Johnston.

A. Kirscht now owns this land.

Thomas E. Jordan

Thomas Jordan filed on NW 23-71-8-W6 on May 26, 1910, proved up and received his title in 1916, then left the country.

C. Anderson now owns this land.

Richard Knight

Richard Knight filed on SW 14-71-8-W6 on June 15, 1914, proved up and received title in 1920.

He had the post office in Lake Saskatoon in 1914, and served in World War I.

This land is now owned by Akin Acres.

The Nick Kolybaba Family

Nick and Mary Kolybaba came to Wembley from Weasel Creek, Alberta on April 1, 1967, having bought the hotel from Nat Nickel.

They had five boys; Fred, William, Nickolas, Terry and Tommy when they came. Wally was born in Beaverlodge in 1970.

Nick sold the hotel to Glen Knutson, and the family moved back to Weasel Creek January 16, 1972 where they bought and operated a store and filling station which they later sold.

They are now living in Edmonton.

Wesley Lovell

Wesley Lovell filed on NE 24-71-8-W6 on June 15, 1912, proved up and received his title in 1915.

He was nicknamed Curly and was troubleshooter for the telegraph line for a number of years.

A. Karvonen now owns this land.

Mrs. Rose Meyer

Mrs. Meyer filed on SW 21-71-8-W6 on September 26, 1916, proved up and received her title in 1918.

She was a sister of Dan and Jake Dean.

Akin Acres now owns this land.

Alise L. Miller

Alise Miller filed on SW 2-71-8-W6 on June 10, 1913, proved up and received title in 1917.

It was on Mr. Miller's land that Williams shot Nelson in May, 1923.

Mr. Miller worked for Craigs at one time, but nothing else is known about him.

E. Stamp now owns this land.

Thomas Bernard Nash

Tom Nash filed on SE 22-71-8-W6 on June 17, 1911, proved up and received his title in 1914.

He was married to Louise Boyd, sister of Frank and they had one son Darby. Tom served in World War I and Darby in World War II.

Tom was a decorator at the McDonald Hotel in Edmonton for years.

This land was later owned by Albert Reid, George Anton, Bill Deering, Wes Stokke, and now it is within the town boundary.

Aaron Percy Pearce

Aaron Pearce filed on SE 15-71-8-W6 on May 31, 1912, proved up and received title in 1915. He joined the army in World War I, and was killed overseas.

G. Dobko now owns this land.

Newton Reed

Newton Reed filed on SW 3-71-8-W6 on August 6, 1916, proved up and received title in 1922.

Nothing else is known about him. H. and E. Stamp now own this land.

Charles Scott

Charles Scott filed on NE 22-71-8-W6 on May 26, 1910, proved up and received his title in 1913.

He was a trapper, called the Weasel King, leaving here about 1914.

This land is now owned by C. Anderson.

Jacob E. Shodin

Jacob Shodin filed on NE 16-71-8-W6 on May 26, 1910, proved up and received his title in 1914. He later left for Chetwynd, B.C.

This land is now owned by R. Kirscht.

Joseph Elias Stewart

Joseph Stewart filed on NW 2-71-8-W6 on July 11, 1912, proved up and received title in 1915.

He was a bachelor, nicknamed Long Joe. He later went to Prince George, B.C.

R. and D. Mulligan now own this land.

Fred Randolph Stokes

Fred Stokes filed on SE 4-71-8-W6 on November 11, 1911, proved up and received title in 1915.

Nothing else is known about him. R. Kirscht now owns this land.

Roy William Stokes

Roy Stokes filed on NE 4-71-8-W6 on July 18, 1912, proved up and received title in 1915.

He pitched for the baseball team at Lake Saskatoon, and had a cousin Fred, living in the area.

R. Kirscht now owns this land.

Fred Walthew

On the original file, it looks like the name was Watkins, but old timers say it was Walthew.

Mr. Walthew filed on SW 26-71-8-W6 on May 26, 1910, proved up and got his title in 1914.

He was an Englishman, staunch Anglican and very community minded. He spent his time between Lake Saskatoon and his homestead.

Fred served in World War I, returning to his homestead which he sold to Herman Trelle in the late 1920's, later moving to Fort St. John, B.C.

Tony Sebastian now owns this land.

William Harry Watts

William Watts got SW 23-71-8-W6 on September 10, 1918 as a soldiers grant. He received his title in 1925, but did not live on this land. Mr. Watts and his two daughters lived in Grande Prairie, where he taught music and played the organ at the Anglican Church.

It is not known when he left the country or where he went.

Heber West

Heber West filed on NW 10-71-8-W6 on August 16, 1910, proved up and received title in 1915.

Mr. West married Vicky Lawrence, sister of Mrs. Charles Hopkins.

This land is now owned by Mrs. John Ditter.

Leroy Wolaner

Leroy Wolaner filed on NW 4-71-8-W6 on October 30, 1911, proved up and received title in 1915.

H. Taylor now owns this land.

William Warren Wolaner

William Wolaner filed on NE 2-71-8-W6 on October 1, 1912, proved up and received title in 1917.

Nothing else is know about him. E. Cassity now owns this land.



Mrs. Rupp on a picnic at Wembley in 1930. That little truck belongs to Eric Andersen.



The Stokke grain tank taking a load of skiers down to the Wapiti. Herman Trelle in fur hat.



Baseball Team late 40's.
Back row: Wes Stokke, Iain MacAlister, Buster Hotte, Jack Bliss, Fred Perdue, Maurice Boisson, Clarence Johnson.
Bottom row: Herb Robertson, Len Robertson, Billy Robertson, Dan Willsey, Melvin Willsey.



Wembley ball team: Armine Kastner, Abe Kady, Roman Pitchko, Lloyd Squires, Henry Thomson, Allen MacKenzie, Stan Dobbin, Roy Boyd, Abe Thiessen, Len Robertson.



Left to Right: Back row: Dan Chambers, Ed Buchanan, Bill Moss, George Neilson.
Front row: Bill Watson, Chas. Ward, Bill Palmer, Alex Hutcheson.



Left to Right: Mary MacKenzie, Myrt Stokke, Kate Watson, Ella Cowpar.



Getting ready for a toboggan party. Phyllis Oxley, Henry Stokke, Edna Stokke, Erna Stokke, Curtis Neilson, Bud Ward, Cliff Purves, Wes Stokke, Wallace McFarlane, Myrtle Osborne, Don Talbot, Jack Rogers. Can you name the rest?



Softball team at Donald round-up July 1937.
Left to right: Erna Talbot, Jean Beatty, Pat Frewer, Doris Boyd, Evelyn Cleve, Manilla Beatty, Magdaline Pitchko, Mary Beatty, Jean Purvis, Marie Trelle, Joan Frewer, Edna Stokke. Boys are Kenny Talbot and Ronnie Trelle. When we won money on Sports Days, we celebrated by having supper in a restaurant with orders limited to fifty cents. Pork sausage was thirty-five cents.



Don Talbot and Len Robertson with one of their successful goose hunts.

Sawing Wood



Willy Schmidt splitting wood.



Ted Day hauling wood with Beaut and Queen.



This is Jake Rupps' woodyard.



In the picture are: Jack McCullough, Carl Brooks, Joe Jensen, Ed Wood, Gordon McCullough and Don Noyes.



Sam Hammerwick at Joachims Cabin, 1931.

Chapter 13:—
World War I & II Veterans

World War I Veterans

Agar, Erwin
Agar, Stanley
Aylesworth, Jim

Barrett, William
Bauce, William
Blair, John
Boyd, Ben
Boyd, Joseph
Bradley, Capt.
Bradley, Charlie
Bradley, Herb
Brumpton, Thomas
Bunyan, Reg A.

Cahoon, John
Campbell, Boyce
Campbell, Capt. Robert
Comeau, Pete (I & II)
Cowpar, Charlie

Dillon, Raymond

Eisenman, Elmer O.
Erskine, Norman Sr.

Farquhar, George
Farr, Guy
Fulton, Harvey

Gilmour, E.
Goldie, William

Howell, Joe

Johns, Edwin
Jordan, Tommy
Jordan, Walter

Kent, Harry
Kent, Robert
Knight, Richard

LaPlace, Jean B.
Leslie, Norman (I & II)

MacDonald, Donald
MacDonald, Murray
Magill, Scotty
Mater, Jack, Sr.
McIntosh, J.L. (I & II)
McLean, Capt. J.C.
Murray, John, Sr. (I & II)

Nash, Thomas
Norley, G.L.

Paverly, Fred
Pearce, Aaron Percy
Penson, Jack
Pierce, Percy
Purves, Lorney

Richardson, Richard

Sellars, Dick
Sinclair, Kenneth
Smith, Charlie
Smith, Fred
South, Floyd
Stewart, Jack T.
Sylvania, Louis

Tissington, James, Sr.

Van Schaick, Floyd

Walthew, Fred
Waterman, Tom
Watson, Bert (I & II)
Watson, Finlay
Watts, Alan K. (I & II)
West, Heber
Wilkie, Gordon
Wood, Ed

Young, Roland (I & II)

World War II Veterans

Anderson, Cliff
Anderson, Henry
Archer, John

Berg, Hans
Bird, Hedley
Boyd, Roy
Breitkreutz, Edward
Bunyan, John

Chambers, Ted
Clayton, George
Cochrane, Dave
Conley, Gordon
Conley, Mike
Cooke, Herb
Cousineau, Ray
Cowpar, Ann
Cowpar, Ed
Craig, Charlie
Craig, Helen (Colton)

Davies, Ken
Davies, William
Diederich, Henry
Dobbyn, Fred
Dobbyn, Stan

Eskdale, Allan
Eskdale, Tom
Erskine, Norman Jr.

Feist, Ted
Foster, Dick
Finch, Lloyd

Gabler, Clarence
Gerow, Keith
Gerow, Lloyd
Gerow, Lyle
Gerow, Tom
Greentree, Reggie
Greentree, Richard
Griffith, Alwen
Griffith, Stan
Grubb, Glen
Grubb, Marion
Grubert, Karl

Head, Alf
Head, Sherman
Hodgson, Sid
Holloway, Frank
Hosker, Harold
Hugel, Ed
Hutcheson, Alex

Jebb, Edgar
Jipson, John
Johnson, Douglas
Johnson, Eddie
Johnson, Harry
Johnston, Clarence

Kastner, Armine
Kennedy, John
Kennedy, Robert
Kitson, John

Leslie, Keith
Lofstrom, Alphons
Lofstrom, Harold
Lowry, Jim

MacAlister, Don Sr.
Macauley, Ernest
McAusland, Floyd
McIntosh, Kenneth
Mates, Gordon
Mathews, Dave
Mansford, Tom
McCullough, Harold
McCullough, Pete
McKenzie, Allan
McKenzie, Tom
McLean, Noel
McNeil, Ronald
Millar, George
Millar, Jack
Miller, Alfred
Miller, Ben
Miller, John
Mitchell, Robert
Mitchell, William Jr
Murray, Eileen

Nielson, Darrel

Osborne, Lawrence

Palmer, Ken
Paul, Alec
Paul, Hecter
Penney, Cecil
Pickles, Jack
Pickles, Walter
Pivert, Roland
Popkey, Gibb
Purves, Cliff

Redmond, Fred
Riggs, Wellington
Rintoul, Alex
Robertson, Bill
Robertson, Herb
Rogers, Jack
Rooney, Elwood
Ross, Andrew
Ross, Hunter

Sask, William
Savard, Leo
Savard, Theodore
Scott, Bob
Sinclair, Hugh
Sinclair, John
Smith, Dick
St. Arnault, John
Stephen, Mary
Stewart, John
Stoll, John

Taylor, Henry
Thomson, Alec
Thomson, Andy
Thomson, Chris
Thomson, Henry
Thomson, Jock
Thornton, Earl
Tissington, Ken
Tissington, Wally
Trelle, Herman
Trelle, Kay

Valin, Elmer
Van Sickle, Alan
Van Sickle, Grace
Van Sickle, Maurice
Van Sickle, Ralph
Vicklund, Assar

Walters, Alfie
White, Doug
Whyte, David Jr.
Whyte, Margaret
Willsey, Daniel
Willsey, Jack
Willsey, Melvin

Young, Bert

Zahn, Joe

World War I Veterans



Jean Baptiste LaPlace.



Reg Bunyan.



Fred Ward (Lt) J.L. McIntosh France W.W.I. (1917).



Finlay and Mabel Watson 1916.



Floyd South - 66th Battalion.



Floyd Van Schaick 1918: Khaki College.



Jim Tissington Sr.



Fred and Minerva Smith - 1915.



Charlotte (Lottie) and Lorney Purves 1916.



Thomas Brumpton, India.



A.K. Watts about 1918.

World War II Veterans



John Stoll about 1942.



Saskatoon Mountain 1942.
Armine Kastner and Olive Kowensky.



Ross and Lucille Beatty with son Reg, just before Reg left for overseas in the fall of 1942.



W130654 (CWAC) Eileen Murray 1945.



M69406 Sgt. Jack Murray.
(Picture taken in St. George's Island Park, Calgary, Alberta).



Ken Davies.



Assar Vicklund in 1944.



Lloyd Gerow and Harold McCullough.



A.K. Watts, Jack Murray and unknown.



Jack Pickles.



Walter Pickles.



Bill Davies.



Keith Leslie.



Norman Leslie.



Elwood Rooney.



A.K. Watts and J. Storm.



Edward Hugel.



Tom Eskdale.



Robert Kennedy.



Allan Eskdale.



Jack Kennedy.



Robert Mitchell.



Henry Diederich.



Unknown and Alphons Lofstrom.



John Miller - Rome, Italy, 1944.



Allan (left) and Maurice Van Sickle.



Douglas, Pauline, and Harry Johnson.



Andy Thomson.



Jock Thomson (centre).



Alex Thomson.



Chris Thomson.



Henry and Chris Thomson.



Lawrence Osborne.



(Left to Right, back row) Herb Cooke, Gordon Mates, Bob Kennedy, Herman Trelle, Roy Boyd, Ron McNeil, unknown.
(Front row) Herb Robertson, Allan McKenzie, Chris Thomson, Doug White, and Cliff Purves.



Ernest Macauley.



Don MacAlister, Italy.



Left to Right: Herb Robertson, Ted Feist and Cliff Purves.



Leo Savard.



Dick Foster.



John St. Arnault.



Left to Right: Bud Ireland, Harry Johnson, Cliff Purvis, Marjorie Feist, Herb Roberston, Doug White, Stan Dobbyn.
Taken at Fort Erie, 1941, visiting at Wellington and Doreen Riggs.



Alex Rintoul.



Robert (Bert) Watson



Harvey Wilson and Pete McCullough.



Charles and Helen Craig.



John Bunyan.



Glen C. Grubb.



M.D. (Marion) Grubb.



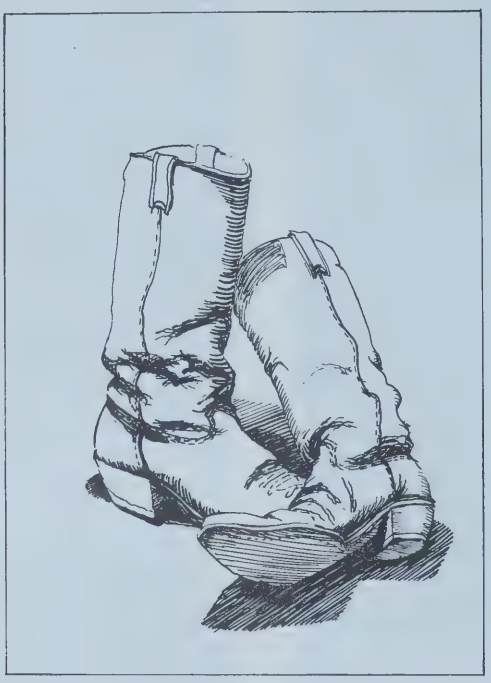
Nellie and George Clayton on leave, in Toronto.



Major Thomson, J.L. McIntosh, Vic Elford and A.K. Watts.



J.L. McIntosh, Ed Wood and Edgar Jebb.



From Past to Present

by Pam Tissington

You've written your story, and what a relief!
You sit back and ponder what gave you such grief.
It reads like statistics, your story to tell;
You've hit all the highlights and really done well.

One page for a lifetime, or maybe it's less;
Is that really all? - too late to assess;
The deadline is over and they want yours in, too;
Those book-minded people made such a to-do!

Its been quite revealing, this digging up roots;
Some things you'd forgotten, or maybe kept mute;
A few still lie buried, but others you keep,
You live them all over - they're haunting your sleep.

How great that our memory files mainly the best,
Or maybe the years tend to lighten the rest.
The wounds and the failures are beginning to fade
But the joys remain clear, as sharp as a blade.

Its fun looking backwards - just for awhile -
To visualize life in a simpler style.
They handled their problems with vigor and zest'
We're now in the harness - lets give it our best!

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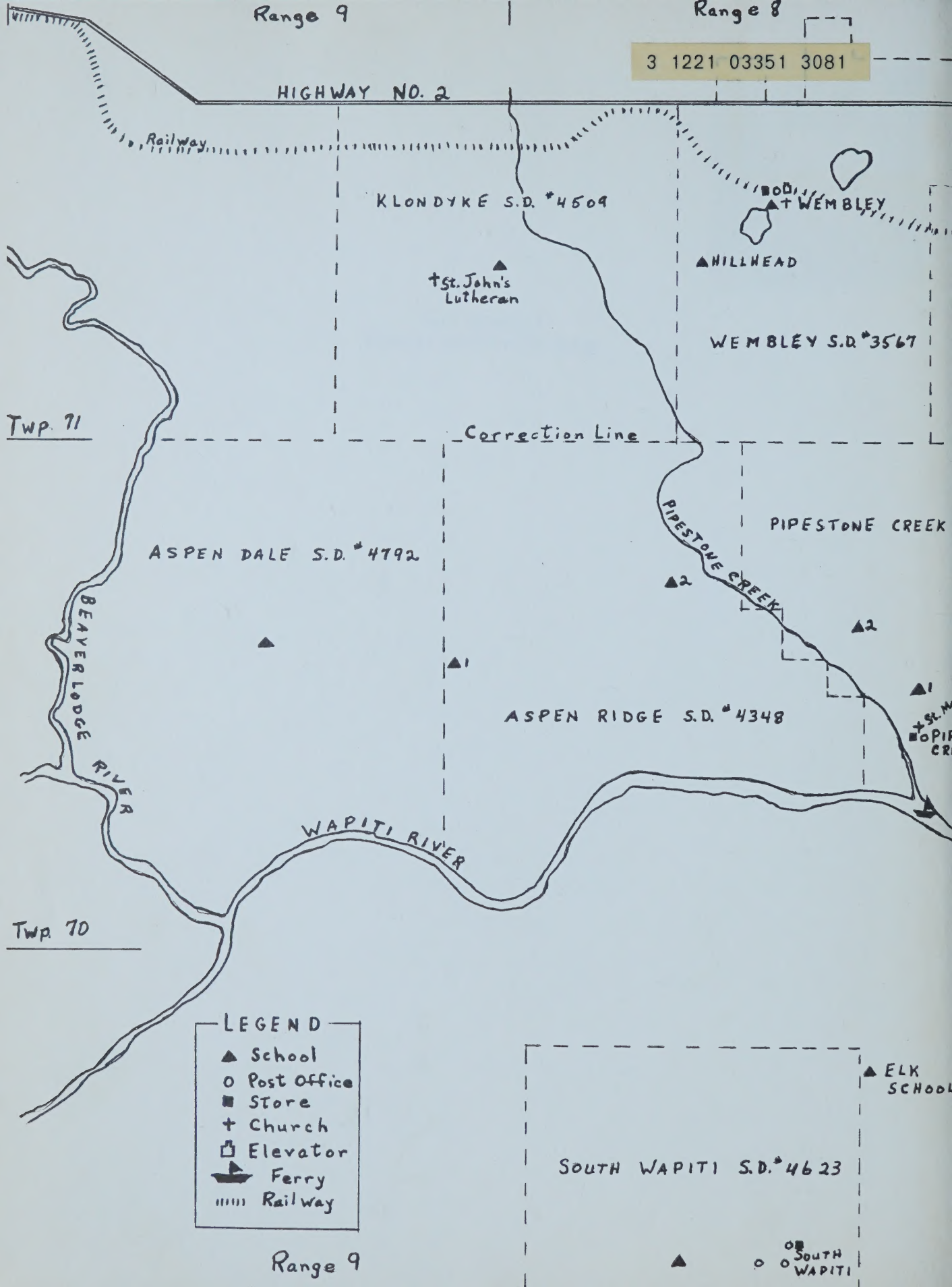
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Railway

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Anglican +

TI SCHOOL DISTRICT #2802

Spring Crk + Presbyterian

SPRING CREEK

Twp 7

LUCKY TREE S.D. #4945

MILLARSTON S.D. #4436

WAPITI RIVER

This map shows the area along the Wapiti in the first 50 years or so of settlement. Consolidation of schools started in the 1950's. During the 1960's and '70's, bush land along the river and south of it began to open up for farms and sub-divisions. Another era of development began.

Grovedale + Baptist

GROVEDALE

Twp 70

GROVEDALE S.D. #4910

BRIDGE CREEK S.D. #4984

Range 7

Range 6